

(Home Preacher, or Church in the House,  
 Edited by Rev. Norman MacLeod, DD.)

Index  
 to  
 Contributors, Texts of Sermons, and Children's Service  
 For each week in the year.

[To be Placed After Title-page.]

Week.	Contributors' Names.	Texts of Sermons.	Children's Service.
1st.	Dr. MacLeod.	"Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead," &c. --Eph v. 14.	The child Moses.
2nd.	Dr. Vaughan.	"Pure religion, and undefiled, before God," &c. --James i. 27.	The child Samuel.
3rd.	Dr. Guthrie.	"Cleanse thou me from secret faults, " &c. --Ps. xix. 12-13.	The child Joash.
4th.	Dr. Raleigh.	"Who hath also sealed us," &c. --2 Cor. i. 22.	The child Jesus.
5th.	Dr. MacLeod.	"Thou knewest not the time of thy visitation," &c. --Luke xix. 44.	The two first brothers.
6th.	"	"Sleep on now and take your rest, " -- Mark xiv. 41.	The twin brothers.
7th.	Dr. Cairns.	"Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth," -- Heb. xii. 6.	Of two brothers who died on mountains.
8th.	Dr Brock.	"Take therefore no thought for the morrow, " --Matt. vi. 34.	Of two brothers called Sons of thunder.
9th.	Dr. Arthur.	"By faith Moses, when he was come to years," &c. --Heb. xi. 24.	Of the boy who had dreams that came true.
10th.	W. B. M'Kenzie.	"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give," &c. --Rev. ii. 10.	Of two prisoners' dreams, and what came of them.

11th.	Dr. M'Cosh.	"Unto me who am less than the least of all saints," --Eph. iii. 8.	Of a king's dreams, and how Joseph's came true at last.
12th.	Dr. MacEwen.	"Within the veil," --Heb. vi. 19.	Something more of how Joseph's dreams came true.
13th.	J.E. Clark.	"And when they had lifted up their eyes," &c. --Matth. xvii. 8.	Of wonders wrought by a staff.
14th.	S. Martin.	"And that from a child," &c. --2 Tim. iii. 15.	Of more wonders wrought by the staff.
15th.	D.K.T. Drummond.	"Whom having not seen, ye love," &c. --1 Peter. i. 8.	Of a great wonder wrought by a serpent of brass.
16th.	Dr. M'Farlane.	"Only believe," --Mark v. 36.	Of a wonder wrought by a mantle.
17th.	Dr. Raleigh.	"Who, when he came," &c. --Acts xi. 23.	Of a wise queen's visit to a wiser king.
18th.	Dr. Morgan.	"There they crucified him," --Luke xxiii. 33.	Of the wicked queen Jezebel.
19th.	Dr. Macduff.	"And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum," &c. --Matt. viii. 5-7.	Of a great battle fought without weapons of war.
20th.	Dr. F. Stevenson.	"And he went on his journeys," &c. --Gen. xiii. 3, 4.	Of God's appearing to Elijah in Horeb.
21st.	S. Martin.	"To testify the gospel of the grace of God," --Acts xx. 24.	Of the voice in the wilderness.
22nd.	Dr. Caird.	"And being in Bethany," &c. --Mark xiv. 3-9.	How the voice in the wilderness ceased to cry.
23rd.	Dr. Morgan.	"Awake, O north wind, and come thou south," &c. --Song iv. 16.	How the first Christian martyr died.
24th.	Dr. MacLeod.	"And he went through the cities and villages," &c. --Luke xiii. 22-30.	How a great persecutor became a great preacher.

25th.	C. H. Spurgeon.	"For Christ's sake," --Eph. iv. 32.	How a prophet came to pray at the bottom of the sea.
26th.	Morley Punshon.	"Behold my servant, whom I uphold," &c. --Is. xlii. 1-4.	How the prophet, risen from the sea, preached at Nineveh, and what followed.
27th.	W. F. Taylor.	"The Lord hath need of them," --Matt. xxi. 3.	How a great king came with thousands, and went back alone.
28th.	Dr. Vaughan.	"Said I not unto thee," &c. --John xi. 40.	Of a lion which killed, but did not eat, his prey.
29th.	Dr. Cairns.	"Then said Jesus unto them plainly," &c. --John xi. 14, 15.	Of the king of Judah whose name was foretold long before his birth.
30th.	Dr. MacLeod.	"Let every one of us please his neighbour," &c. --Rom. xv. 21.	How an angel went to prison, and what he did there.
31st.	Dr. Fraser.	"And Ittai answered the king, and said," &c. --2 Sam. xv. 21.	How a little girl died, and was brought to life again.
32nd.	Dr. Cooke.	"Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead," --Rev. iii. 1.	How Paul came to visit Europe, and what happened on his arrival there.
33rd.	Thomas Binney.	"Then cometh Jesus unto a place called Gethsemane," &c. --Matt. xxvi. 36-38.	Of the family in Bethany.
34th.	J. C. Ryle.	"And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest," &c. --Luke xxii. 60-62.	How Life met with Death, and what happened.

35th.	Dr. Morgan.	"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace," &c. --Is. xxvi. 3, 4.	Of the supper made to Jesus in Bethany, some days before his death.
36th.	Dr. MacLeod.	"There was a certain rich man," &c. --Luke xvi. 19-31.	Behold, thy King cometh unto thee.
37th.	Dr. Caird.	"They joy before thee according to the joy in harvest," --Is. ix. 3.	They went through a fiery furnace.
38th.	Dr. Vaughan.	"Bring him unto me," --Mark ix. 19.	How a great king came to eat grass like a beast.
39th.	R. W. Dale.	"That the name of the Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you," --2 Thess. i. 12.	Of a strange hand that wrote words on the wall.
40th.	Dr. MacLeod.	"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," &c. --Mark xii 30, 31.	He went through a den of lions.
41st.	R. Maguire.	"The eternal God is thy refuge," &c. --Deut. xxxiii.27.	How an orphan stranger came to be a queen.
42nd.	Dr. Barry.	"They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them," --Luke xvi. 29.	How the wicked was caught in his own snare.
43rd.	R. Balgarnie.	"And went up into a mountain to pray," &c. --Luke ix. 28-31.	The story of Ruth.
44th.	C. H. Spurgeon.	"He shall feed his flock like a shepherd," --Is. xl. 11.	The story of Ruth--(continued).
45th.	Archb. of York.	"Bear ye one another's burdens," &c. --Gal. vi. 2.	Of Paul's last visit to Jerusalem.
46th.	Dr. Candlish.	"The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart," &c. --Is. lvii. 1.	How Paul came to be sent to Rome.
47th.	A. M'Laren.	"And the king said unto Barzillai," &c. --2 Sam. xix. 33-37.	Through what perils Paul passed on his way to Rome.
48th.	Bishop of Derry.	"So he drove out the man," &c. --Gen. iii. 24, and Rom. vii. 24, 25.	The upper room.



49th.	Dr. Charteris.	"He that endureth to the end shall be saved," --Matt. x. 22.	The garden.
50th.	Dr. Edmond.	"Thy dead men shall live," &c. --Is. xxvi. 19.	The arraignment.
51st.	Dr. Eadie.	"Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him," &c. --Rev. i. 7.	The cross.
52nd.	Dr. Alexander.	"For what is your life? It is even a vapour," &c. --James iv. 14.	The sepulchre.
Special.  “	{Archbishop of Canterbury.  { -----	For the First Sunday of the New Year. --"In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength," --Isa. xxx. 15.  Prayers for Special Occasions.	

The  
**The Home Preacher;**  
or  
**Church in the House.**

---

MORNING WORSHIP

FIRST SUNDAY OF THE YEAR.

Father of Lights, from whom cometh down every good and perfect gift! We beseech of Thee to grant us at this time the gracious aid of Thy Holy Spirit, that our minds may be enlightened and our spirits sanctified by Thy holy word; and so teach us to pray that we may ask in faith, and receive with thanksgiving, those things which are according to Thy holy will.  
*Amen.*

HYMN, or *Psalm xxiii.*

For thy mercy and thy grace,  
Faithful through another year,  
Hear our song of thankfulness,  
Father, and Redeemer, hear!

In our weakness and distress,  
Rock of strength, be Thou our stay!  
In the pathless wilderness,  
Be our true and living way!

Who of us death's awful road  
In the coming year shall tread?  
With thy rod and staff, O God,  
Comfort thou his dying head!

Keep us faithful, keep us pure,  
Keep us evermore thine own!  
Help, O help us to endure!  
Fit us for the promised crown!

So within thy palace gate  
We shall praise, on golden strings,  
Thee, the only Potentate,  
Lord of lords, and King of kings!

## GENESIS I.

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. 2.  
And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was

upon the face of the deep: and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. 3. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. 4. And God saw the light that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. 5. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day. 6. And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. 7. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. 8. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day. 9. And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. 10. And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that it was good. 11. And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. 12. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good. 13. And the evening and the morning were the third day. 14. And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: 15. And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was

so. 16. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also. 17. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth, 18. And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good. 19. And the evening and the morning were the fourth day. 20. And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. 21. And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good. 22. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth. And the evening and the morning were the fifth day. 23. And the evening and the morning were the fifth day. 24. And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind, and it was so. 25. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and everything that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good. 26. And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 27. So God created man in his own image: in the image of God created he

him; male and female created he them. 28. And God blessed them: and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

-----

*Prayer.*

“Our Father in Heaven!” Amidst all the changes of our mortal life we come to Thee. We rejoice in Thee as the Ever-living, “the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever,” unchanged in Thy love to us, and to all who put their trust in Thee. We worship Thee with all who know and love Thee on earth. We worship Thee with the holy angels who have never fallen; with patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, and with the noble army of martyrs, who have come out of great tribulation, and washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. We worship Thee with all our friends, who have fallen asleep in Jesus, and who are now in Thy presence with exceeding joy: and we desire, with the whole family in earth and in heaven, that Thy name may be hallowed, Thy kingdom may come, and Thy will may be done in earth as it is done in heaven.

Father of mercies! We thank Thee for all we have received from Thee, not only during the past year, but during all the years

of our varied life. We thank Thee for our temporal mercies; for deliverance from danger, seen and unseen, and from pain, sickness and grievous suffering. We thank Thee for strength and comfort vouchsafed to ourselves and those dear to us in past seasons of sorrow. We thank Thee for delivering us from temptation, for keeping us from falling, and for all we have been enabled by Thy mercy to be and to do. Holy Father! We praise Thee for the gift of Thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who died for our sins, rose for our justification, who ever liveth to make intercession for us, and hath promised to come to take us to Himself, that where He is there we may be also. We thank Thee for the gift of Thy Holy Spirit, to be with us and in us for ever; for the renewal of our nature through Him, and the spiritual strength and comfort received from Him. We thank Thee for all the means which in Thy wisdom and love Thou hast adopted, to enable us to know and serve thee as Thy children. Bless the Lord, O our souls, and forget not all His benefits: who forgiveth all our iniquities; who healeth all our diseases; who redeemeth our life from destruction; who crowneth us with loving-kindness and tender mercies.

The more we see the glory of Thy character and of Thy ways, the more do we see the sin in our own hearts, and the sins brought forth in our lives. If Thou hadst forgotten us as we have forgotten Thee; if Thou hadst been as indifferent to our good as we have been to Thy will; if Thou hadst said, "Depart from me," as in our hearts each of us has often said to Thee: we would have

perished long ago. But Thou has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. Blessed be Thy name, that Thou who knowest us as we know not ourselves, and hatest our iniquities with infinite hatred, hast yet loved us in Jesus Christ Thy Son; and declared that though our sins are as scarlet Thou wilt make them white as snow; and sworn that as Thou livest Thou has no pleasure in the death of a sinner, but rather that he would turn from his wickedness which he hath committed and live; and has commanded us to believe in Jesus Christ for the remission of our sins. Most merciful, holy and righteous Father! Forgive us, we beseech of Thee, for the sake of Jesus Christ, whom Thou has set forth as a propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the world. And grant that all of us may enter a New Year enjoying peace with Thee through Him, and that the God of peace may sanctify us wholly in soul, spirit and body.

We beseech of Thee to bless each member of the family and every dear friend, who we in our hearts bring before Thee, and to help them according to their individual need, and Thine abundant mercy; so that all of us this year, whether by life or by death, may glorify Thee by humbly accepting of, and by earnestly obeying, Thy most holy and righteous will.

We pray that Thy kingdom may come, Thy will be done, throughout the world; that Christ may more and more see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied; and that many sons and daughters may by Him be brought out of every nation unto



Thee. Renew and quicken every portion of Thy church on earth, that all its members may consider one another, and provoke to love and to good works. Lord, bless our country, that we may be exalted by righteousness guiding our national councils and all our commercial transactions, and by our people at home and abroad leading Christian lives. Lord, bless our Queen, that she may possess Thee as her strength, enjoy Thee as her comfort, and obey Thee as her sovereign.

Hear us for the sake of Him in whose words we would sum up our petitions saying, “Our Father which art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name, &c. *Amen.*”

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

Blessed Lord, who hast caused all Holy Scriptures to be

written for our learning; grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience, and comfort of Thy holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which Thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Hymn, or *Psalm c.*

Awake, and sing the song  
Of Moses and the Lamb!  
Wake ev'ry heart, and ev'ry tongue,  
To praise the Saviour's name!

Sing of his dying love,  
Sing of his rising power:  
Sing how He intercedes above  
For us whose sins He bore.

Ye pilgrims on the road  
To Zion's city, sing!  
Rejoice ye in the Lamb of God,  
In Christ th' eternal King!  
Soon shall we hear Him say,  
"Ye blessed children, come!"  
Soon will He call us hence away,  
To our eternal home.

There shall our raptured tongue  
His endless praise proclaim;  
And sweeter voices tune the song  
Of Moses and the Lamb!

## EPHESIANS V. 6-21.

Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. 7. Be not ye therefore partakers with them. 8. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light; 9. (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth;) 10. Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. 11. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. 12. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. 13. But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light; for whatsoever doth make manifest is light. 14. Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. 15. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, 16. Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. 17. Wherefore, be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. 18. And

be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; 19. Speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; 20. Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; 21. Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

-----

## SERMON I.

“Awake thou that sleepest.” --Eph. v. 14.

How shall we distinguish the real from the unreal? --or things as they are from what they appear to be? We often express our sense of the unreality of anything by saying, “It was all a dream!” Yet while asleep and dreaming, does not everything appear to be real as when awake? How seldom, indeed, during our day-life have we ever experienced feelings of such wonder, admiration, or horror, as during our night-life! “In thoughts,” says, Job, “from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men, fear came upon me and trembling, which made all my bones to shake!” But however real the things we see or hear in shadowy dream-land may appear to be at the time,

yet when we awake amid the sunlight of common day, we smile at those visions of the night and say, “It was but a dream!”

The covetous man, for instance, in his sleep sees hoards of uncounted wealth within his grasp; the ambitious man possesses rank, honour and power; the loving and bereaved meet once more the lost and gone, see their familiar faces, and hear their familiar voices, as of old; but each sleeper as he awakes exclaims, “Alas, it was but a dream!”

Where then are our realities, if these be our dreams? What can we possess, when awake, which is not as shadowy and perishing?

“Behold my riches!” replies with confidence the man of wealth; “for this gold and silver which I have in the bank, which I grasp so firmly in my hands, are not dreams, but realities!” “And here, too, are my rank, my power, my honours, all substantial things, and no shadows!” boasts another, as he rejoices in his manifold possessions. “Nor are these dreams, but realities!” murmurs the affectionate man, as he gazes around the family circle, and clasps his dear ones to his bosom. But so would every dreamer have maintained with equal confidence, had he been able while asleep to argue about the reality of all he seemed to possess. Yet, alas! It may be that he who dreamed of riches awoke to find himself a shivering and forsaken pauper; and he who in his visions possessed rank and power awoke a fettered slave; while the heart which revelled in the interchange of joyous greetings with a united family and restored friends,

may have awoke with a sudden cry of sorrow amid the silence and loneliness of a bereaved and empty home!

And thus, too, may we from our every-day life, which seems to be so very real, and to have in it so much that is substantial and permanent, with so little that is dream-like and shadowy, awake, nevertheless, to realise its very strange and visionary character!

Could any one, for example, in a few years hence visit the tombs of those who now boast themselves, in the way we have alluded to, of the reality of their possessions, and could he by a superhuman power quicken them unto life with the cry -- "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead!" where then would those things be which to them are now so real and so very unlike dreams? Where their gold and silver, their lands and heritages! Alas! They have passed away from the memory of other generations, and are known only to the curious who peruse their moss-covered tombstones. Where all the lovely forms, the blooming faces, the young children and strong men, who were the most precious realities on earth to their affectionate hearts? They, too, are not to be found on earth, and are forgotten from among men as if they had never been; and their remains are but as the dust and rubbish of the grave. Are the things, then, which we now possess so very substantial and enduring as we assumed them to be? Or have we not all been dreaming while we seemed awake!

But is there nothing real? Is all a dream? No! Blessed be God, there are realities, and not dreams, to which we should awake, unless we are to sleep the sleep of eternal death: --

1. *Let us awake to the reality of our individual importance.*

There are two classes of dreamers on this point. The one includes all who think they are of *no importance whatever*. These are very often to be found among the poor and unknown in this world--the stranger and the destitute, the orphan and the friendless. Such persons are apt to measure themselves by what the world thinks of them; and they conclude accordingly, and very naturally, that they are of little value. They feel themselves lost in the great crowd--fractions too small to count in the immense sum of human life, and too worthless to be missed out of it; mere bubbles floating on the mighty sea, for whom no one will mourn when they disappear. What are their joys or sorrows, their hopes and fears, their struggles and difficulties, to the big and busy world! Such thoughts are apt to make the heart hard and selfish, to shut it against our brother, ay, to shut it against our God; for they are unloving thoughts of God, and arise, perhaps, from supposing that the estimate of our Maker, and that we stand in no closer relationship to Him who is unseen, than to the great world which we see and hear. Yet what would we think if we heard a prince muttering in his sleep, complaining of his privations, and speaking of himself as one unknown and uncared for, deserted by every friend, condemned to live only for labour, yea, to die unheeded and alone, but who

all the while was sleeping and dreaming in a splendid palace, with a king, his father, and royal brothers looking on, and watching over him in his slumbers? Why then those tears and groans of ours, this bitter anxiety and hopelessness from men and women, as if they were of no importance whatever, and utterly unknown and uncared for on the earth -- while all the time they are in the grand palace of their Father, with angel brothers watching over us! Awake, O poor sleeper! All this suffering and trial, these days of toil and nights of sorrow, this daily history, which make you think yourself of so little importance as that no one in the whole universe ever thinks of you, or carries your burden--this is the *dream*! But the reality is -- what many call a dream, -- that God Almighty, who made the heavens and the earth, made you and breathed into you the breath of life, that He made you to know, love and enjoy Himself for ever; that He redeemed you to Himself, not with silver and gold, but with the precious blood of His Son; that He knows you individually, and loves you, and cares for you as much as if you were the first and last and only created thing. Surely, then, you are of incalculable importance! Who can too highly value creatures made for such noble ends, and redeemed from slavery and death by such an infinite price! We are all of more value than the whole material universe, which by the word of God may in a moment pass away, while the poorest Lazarus shall live through endless ages in the presence of his God.



There are others, again, who dream of being of great importance, merely because they are so in their own eyes or in the eyes of some circle, whether smaller or larger, of which they may happen to be the centres. They are of importance only because of their family, their wealth, or their influence in the village, city, parish or county, in which they may happen to live. Now, if this constitutes our only or chief importance, what a dream it is! Think of the millions in our country who never heard of our name, nor of the name of the place in which we reside! Think of the hundreds of millions in the world who never heard even the name of our country! Let us think, moreover, how very soon not one person on earth, will know we have ever existed; when all this busy life of ours, which fills up our days and years, which seem so many and so long, will have passed away from the known to the unknown, like a song which leaves an echo but for a moment, or a leaf which flutters for a while in breeze and sunshine, and then falls into the stream and is swept into the shoreless, fathomless sea! Alas! What foolish dreamers are we, if these be our only thoughts about ourselves! Let us awake from them to a true sense of our awful and real importance as beings created and redeemed by Christ, to love and serve God now and for ever!

*2. Let us awake to the reality of unseen and eternal things.* The sleeper may be in the midst of friends or enemies, and be connected with things of unspeakable importance to his well-being, and yet in his sleep all these may be to him as if they

had no existence. His mind is wholly occupied by what he appears to see, hear or do in his dreams. And thus to many, their only world is what they see with their bodily eyes, or touch with their bodily hands, or know by their five senses. Things visible are their only realities. Speak to them of God, or Christ, or the Holy Ghost, of saints and angels, or of heaven and its holiness, of hell and its wickedness, of Satan and his angels -- all this mighty world of persons and things, which cannot be discerned by the eye or ear -- and it is to them shadowy, misty, far away, and unreal as a dream. Yet what separates us from this same unseen world! Let only a pin point touch the mysterious source of life in our brain, or let the thin valve of our heart give way, or death come in any of the ten thousand forms to which we are hourly liable -- and then where will our present realities be? What then would this world be, which is now perhaps all in all to us? What then would be our present business and our amusements, our well-laid plans and purposes, this hoped-for meeting, or that anticipated parting, those worldly cares and matters which we call so interesting, so pressing, and so important? What would be our home, our circle of friends, and all this hum of busy life, which alone occupies the thoughts, fills up the time of the dreamer, and shuts out every thought of another and an eternal world? All would depart as a vision! In the twinkling of an eye, the universe would be revolutionised to us, and those things which seem now so unreal and dreamlike would, in a few minutes after death, be our grand and

unchangeable realities for ever and ever. But we are now in the midst of this very unseen world, and in the presence of its inhabitants! Let us therefore, open the eyes of our spirit, and by faith awake to the reality of things as they are, and not dream of them as they appear to be.

Little did the shepherds of Bethlehem think, when calmly watching their sheep by night, and gazing on the starry sky, that the unseen world, which seemed so far away, was even then around them; and that the angel Gabriel knew them and was about to tell them the most joyful tidings which had ever reached the earth; and that a multitude of the heavenly host were filling the amphitheatre of the skies, and gazing on them, ready to burst forth into such an hallelujah of praise as never had greeted the ears of mortal men! But so it was. Heaven and heavenly persons were not far away, but very near, and heaven's King was Himself among them, and had become an inhabitant of their own lowly village of Bethlehem. And thus, too, little did Judas think, when he was sitting at the same table with his Lord, in a scene of holy calm, surrounded with the apostles of the Church, and listening to such prayers and heavenly teaching as never proceeded from mortal lips, that he stood on the very edge of that awful gulf into which he fell in a few hours afterwards. Nor did the poor dying thief suspect, when he first beheld the cross, the crowd, and the stern realities of Calvary, that these were so dream-like, and that he was about to enter paradise with his Redeemer, which was no dream! And so it is

with us all. God and things unseen are very near, though we may not, in our sleep of ignorance or unbelief, think them to be so. Let us but awake, and then we shall say, like Jacob, when he rose from his stony pillow and pondered over the dream of the night: -- *"Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not."*

3. *Let us awake to the reality of God's love to us.* How ignorant is a child when it is asleep upon its mother's knee, of its mother's love! Yet how real it is! How it beams in her eye as she gazes on her child's countenance, and fills her bosom as she folds the babe in her arms! But that little one cannot measure the depth, nor comprehend the many thoughts of her love, nor understand its absolute dependence upon it. And how many are thus asleep in the very sunshine of God's love! For He loves us truly, when we know it not. And because He loves ourselves, He hates our sins and sinful characters, and wishes that these characters were changed. Yet how are our characters to be ever changed and become lovable? How shall our ways become such as to please Him who is so good? How shall all that is vile in us and at enmity to God be rooted out, and all that is pure, holy, and in sympathy with Him be implanted? In one word, how shall love to God be ever kindled in our hearts, and abide there for ever? How indeed, unless He first loves us, and we have faith in that love? For so long as we are asleep to this love -- see it not, believe it not, but have frightful dreams of one who has no interest in us, and who willeth rather that we should perish than repent and have everlasting life -- love cannot, in the nature of

things, be kindled! And where no love is, death is, and the fear which hath torment. To awake from sleep and arise from the dead, is really to awake from this blindness to God's love, this death of an unloving heart, and to *see* with our spirit His love to us in Jesus and in this light of love to see Him and see ourselves. Let us awake, then to the glorious reality! If not, it will practically be to us as if it were a dream, even as light is a dream, and not a reality, to a blind man's eye!

4. *Let us awake to the reality of the work assigned to each of us on earth by God.* It is possible to work while asleep; somnambulists often do so. But how unlike is the labour of the man asleep to that of the earnest, wise and persevering effort of the man awake? And thus it is, that men who are morally asleep to the grand and abiding realities of existence may yet, in a sense, labour all the days of their life. Who so busy as they! Their hands or heads are never idle. They labour for the meat that perisheth; they labour to be rich, and to increase the means of their earthly enjoyments; they labour to be amused, "to kill time," and to be kept in a round of excitement; they labour as master or servant, merchant or mechanic, in politics or trade; all are busy -- and yet who, after all, may be so idle as they! At the eleventh hour of their earthly life, ere the midnight darkness comes, when no man can work, we may ask them with truth, Why stand ye *all the day* idle? The pious Christian invalid, who has been confined for years to bed, with strength scarcely sufficient to move a limb or utter a sentence, has been in God's

sight, and in the sight of the ministering angels, busier than they, if accepting in faith the work of patient submission to God's will, and "labouring in prayer." For what is the object of all this ceaseless activity visible among men? What means this intense life? -- this hurrying to and fro with the speed of the whirlwind over the earth? -- those anxious looks and knit brows, and this severe economy of time? What great work is doing, what great ends are sought, to accomplish which, time seems to be so short, and all existing means so inadequate? Alas! It is possible that the only work which is left undone, is that for which man was created: "This is the work of God, to believe on Him whom He hath sent!" What of *that* work of God? "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." "Work while it is called to-day, seeing the night cometh in which no man can work!" What of such work as this? Is every field to be bought but the one having the hidden treasure -- every pearl but the one of great price? Are men to labour for the meat that perisheth, and utterly to neglect that which endureth unto life everlasting? Oh! Say, have we not been living and acting too long with reference only to the visions, grave or gay, of a perishing life, while asleep to the work of a life that must endure for ever. Do we wonder then, as the years pass away, and old age comes, it should be to so many to be as the baseless fabric of a vision which leaves not even a wreck behind! What has become of all their many works and many labours, as the means of giving rest and satisfaction to their souls? All gone! Eternity may thus be entered, but found

empty of any treasure laid up for the soul. There was no true work done during the earthly spring-time, and so there is no harvest to crown with its fatness the autumn of our years. Well may the prophet ask all such, "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? And your labour for that which satisfieth not?" Oh! awake to a sense of the reality, the infinite importance, of the work actually given us to do, and for which God holds us responsible -- the one mighty work of knowing, loving, and serving God through Jesus Christ our Lord, and the power of the Holy Ghost! And lastly --

5. *We should awake to the reality of our danger, unless we are "in Christ Jesus."* A member may not be "in Christ," who is yet a member of the Church of Christ. Simon Magus was baptized by Philip, yet remained in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity. Ananias and Sapphira were members of the first apostolic Church, yet were slain by the power of God on account of their falsehoods.

A person may not be "in Christ" who is possessed of much that is morally right. "All these I have kept from my youth," was the reply of the young man to whom Christ repeated the commandments, so that "Jesus, looking on him, *loved* him," yet "he went away sorrowful," because lacking "one thing needful" -- to be "in Christ."

A person *not* "in Christ" may have remarkable gifts, and do many remarkable things "in his name." "Many will come to me on that day, saying Lord, Lord, have we not cast out devils in

thy name, and in thy name done many wonderful works? Then shall I profess unto them *I never knew you*; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.”

To be “in Christ,” implies sincere faith in Him as the only Saviour. “He who believeth in me, though he were dead, he shall live.” “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.”

To be “in Christ,” implies a changed heart and thorough reformation of life, by the Holy Spirit. “Marvel not that I say unto you Ye must be born again.” “If any man be *in Christ*, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold all things are become new.” “The life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.” “If Christ be *in* you, the body is dead as to sin, and the Spirit is life as to righteousness.”

Now there is “*no condemnation* to those who are in Christ Jesus,” who thus “walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” But there is condemnation to all who are *not* in Christ Jesus. The same God of truth who hath promised life to all that are his, has also passed the sentence of death on all who are *not* his. “He who believeth *not*, is condemned *already*.” “If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is *none of his*.”

But are there not many without those marks which are declared by God to distinguish “those who are Christ’s” from those who are not, and who possess many habits inconsistent with being new creatures, or even “babes in Christ;” who do not



feel sufficient interest in the question of their soul's salvation, as to consider even how they stand in relation to the Redeemer; but who, nevertheless, experience no fear whatever of the consequences of their state, nor the most transitory sense of danger from their position! How can this be? What means this kind of peace? They are asleep! Their quiet is that of the dreamer, who is ignorant of danger; not that of the waking man, who is secure against it.

The picture is trite and familiar, of a sleeper thus enjoying repose while in the midst of circumstances threatening him with sudden destruction. Often has the affecting illustration been presented to our fancy, of a sailor-boy wandering back in his dreams to his early and happy home. He recognizes it from afar -- he sees the rocks, the streams, the trees, the hills, which so long have haunted his memory on the waste of waters -- mysterious powers seem to clog his limbs, as he eagerly tries to reach the familiar scene -- until at last he is in the fond embrace of father and mother, while brothers and sisters hang around him. But alas! The tumult of his joy is suddenly broken by the roar of breakers around his vessel, and by the death-cries of her despairing crew!

And thus may we cry, "Peace, peace," while God says, "No peace."

"Soul, take thine ease!" cried the man whose life consisted only in the abundance of the things he possessed; "thou hast much goods laid up for many years" -- this was the dream of the

Christless worldling. “Thou fool, this night that soul will be required of thee!” this was the waking reality --

“Lord, Lord, open to us! Have we not eat and drunk in thy presence? Hast thou not taught in our streets? Have we not done many wonderful things in thy name!” -- this was the dream of the Christless hypocrite. “Depart from me. I never knew you!” this was the waking reality --

“Awake, then, arise, thou sleeper! and Christ will give thee light.”

Jesus is the light and life of men. We cannot quicken ourselves into newness of life, but we can cry to Jesus to do so; nor can we obtain the true light from ourselves, but we can go to Jesus and ask him to enlighten us. For thus seeking Him, praying to Him, believing in Him, we *are* responsible; and it is impossible for any man to seek and pray with real meaning, and not find; to come to Him, and be cast out; to believe in Him, without being made alive and walking in the light with reference to all those realities to which our attention has been turned. A new year reminds us that it is high time to wake out of sleep. May Jesus Christ, our life and light, enable us all to do so, and to walk as children of the day! “Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day.” “Let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for an helmet the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died

for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.” -- *Amen.* --- Editor.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

### THE CHILD MOSES.

The word of God is always true and sure. He never fails to do what he says he will do. When he promises anything, and sets the time, it comes at that time. But when he does not say at what time he will bring the thing to pass, he often delays it for a long while. He is sure to do what he said in the end, but he does not do it as soon as his people wish and hope. He wants by that to try their faith; to try if they will hold fast their trust in his truth. And it is in cases like this that strong faith shows itself. When a long time has past, and the thing promised has not come, little faith faints, and is ready to fear that it will never come: but strong faith says -- Wait, it is sure to come; for He has said it, and He will do it.

Sometimes God does more than merely take a long time to fulfil his word. He sometimes seems to work all the other way. He said to Abram, for instance, when he told him to leave his

own country, that he would give him another. So he did, by and by. He gave it to Abraham in his children. But when Abraham himself died, he had only got a grave in it. Besides, for some hundreds of years the people that had Abraham for their forefather were kept in Egypt and were even made slaves there. So it seemed to many of them that God had forgotten them, and was going to leave them always in their bondage. There were some among them, however, who felt sure that God would keep his word, and come to help them and they told the others that God had said to their fathers that this long hard time of toil would come, but that afterwards there would be great deliverance; and that Joseph when he was dying spoke of this, and told them to take his bones with them, when they should come to leave the land.

These last were right. God did come to help his poor people at the set time. Just when things were at the darkest, light began to break. A little child was born, who was to lead the people out of Egypt when he grew up: and I am going to tell you now the strange way in which he came to be brought up in the very palace of the king that was oppressing the people of Israel.

The king-name of the rulers of Egypt was Pharaoh. Now the Pharaoh that was reigning when the child I speak of was born, was very hard and cruel. He had come to be frightened at the great increase of the people of Israel. He said to the men of his court -- If those slaves grow to be many more than they are,

and there should happen to be war, they will join our foes, and be too strong for us. So in his fear he told his people to cast into the Nile all the boy-children that should be born to the Israelites. They were to let the little girls live, but to kill all the boys. And many a wicked cruel deed was probably done at the king's bidding.

The king had a daughter. It is thought she was his only child, and that when the king died the crown would come to her, or to her son, if she had one. So she was a person of great importance; and her woman heart was not so cruel as her father's. Now, one morning this princess, with her maids, walked down to the river's side, that she might wash herself. This was the very river about which the king had said --Cast all the male babes into it. It was a big, deep river, and besides there were ugly crocodiles in some places about it, to eat the poor babes. At the place where the king's daughter came to bathe, there were long rushes growing on the bank; and as she and her maids were passing along, they saw a curious little basket lying among the flags. They had never seen anything like it before. So the princess told one of her maids to go and bring it to her: and when she had done this, they found it was a little chest with a lid, all carefully plastered outside with pitch to keep the water out. Then they raised the lid, and wondered to find a lovely little baby lying in it. Poor thing! It began to cry, and tears stood on its cheeks. The king's daughter, knowing what her father had ordered to be done with the boys of the Hebrews, said

at once this is one of the little children of these people, and her heart warmed to it as she looked at it. No wonder; it must have been a hard heart that did not pity the little infant, so pretty and so helpless, lying there in its strange cradle.

But before I tell you what happened afterwards, I must turn back and give you some account of how the baby came there. This little child's father and mother were pious people, and were among those who were sure that God would keep his word and bring Israel out of Egypt. They had some older children. But when this boy was born, they saw a very strange beauty on his face, and in some way God pressed the thought into their hearts, that he had been born to do a great work. So they were encouraged to do all they could to keep him safe, and his mother hid him in the house for three months. But then, I suppose, when he began to be lively and stirring and noisy, or when it was being told about that he had been born, she found she could not keep him any longer there in safety. Some of the Egyptian spies would be finding him out, and tearing him from her arms to throw him into the Nile. So, not without praying about it, you may be sure, and getting God's leading, she made the curious basket I have mentioned, and putting the child into it, hid it among the flags. Then she set a sister of the babe to watch, keeping out of sight herself, but full of hope that God would bring all about wisely for her infant's safety.

Now when this sister (I am not quite sure what her name was, but probably it was Mary) saw the Egyptian princess and

her maidens opening the basket, she stole nearer to them, and soon observed that they were sorry for the child, and noway disposed to hurt it. Indeed, she could see that the princess was getting to like it, and meant to save it. So she very respectfully went up to her, and asked if she would like her to go and get a nurse for it, from among the Hebrew women. The princess was pleased, and told her to go. You may be sure she did not lose any time, but running home, told her own mother, and brought her to the princess. "Here is a baby," said the king's daughter, "take it, and nurse it for me, and I will pay you for doing it. I have given it a name, to keep in mind how I found it. Take care of my little Moses." Yes, to be sure, she will -- her own darling boy it is, given back by God to her arms.

So she nursed and trained him without fear, for no one durst hurt the child that the king's daughter had resolved to adopt. After a time he was taken home to the palace, and got a princely education, and grew up to be a very wise, brave man -- till everybody thought he would be king one day. But I meant to tell you only of his childhood at present. Some other time, I may have a story about his after life.

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY

1. Can you find a promise of God, where he set the time for doing it?

2. Can you name a great promise which God delayed for a long time to fulfil?
3. Can you give the names of any persons who showed strong faith?
4. What was the name of the country given to Abraham's seed? And where was Abraham's grave in it?
5. Where do you find a passage in which God foretold to their fathers that the people of Israel would be a long time oppressed in a strange land?
6. Where in the new testament are we told about Joseph giving directions regarding his bones?
7. About how long were Israel in Egypt?
8. What other names in scripture were -- like Pharaoh -- the names of a line of kings or emperors?
9. Is the Nile anywhere named in scripture?
10. Is there anything about the crocodile in the Bible?
11. How many things in the Bible are called by the name of ark?
12. Is there any other person in scripture noted, like Pharaoh, for his cruelty to babes?
13. Where are we told in the Bible that Moses was very beautiful when a child?
14. How do we know that God in some way had made the parents of Moses to put trust in him about their child, as born to some great end?



15. What is the Old Testament form of the name of Moses' sister?

16. In what passage are we told that Moses was well educated?

-----

For answers to the foregoing questions, the young reader may consult -- Daniel ix.; Gen. iii.; Heb. xi.; Gen. xlix.; Gen. xv.; Heb. xi.; Acts vii.; Luke ii., iii.; Job xli., Gen. vi.; Exod. xxv.; Matt. ii.; Acts vii.; Heb. xi.; Exod. xv.; Acts vii.

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE LESSONS.

1. Who created the heavens and the earth? Gen. i. 1; John i. 1, 3, and 10; Col. i. 16.

2. Can you enumerate the things mentioned in Gen. i, as having been created by God?

3. After whose image was man created? Gen. i. 26.

4. What is Jesus Christ called in John i. 1, 9; and in Col. i. 18?

5. How long has he existed? John i. 2; Col. i. 17.

6. In these chapters what is Jesus Christ said to have done as Creator? Col. i. 16; and as Redeemer? Compare Col. i. 20; John i. 12.

## *Prayer.*

**O Lord, we were cast on thy care when we were infants, and Thou hast kept us till now. We thank Thee for home, and food, and clothes, and for our parents' love. We pray that Thou wouldest take kind charge of poor orphans, and raise up friends for them. We bless Thee that we live in a country where there is just rule, and a kind and motherly Queen. Do Thou bless her, and her royal house. Remember all that are oppressed, and deliver them. Save us all from the power of our great foe, the wicked one. To thy name be glory and power for ever, in Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.***

-----

## **EVENING WORSHIP.**

Lord teach us out of thy law, and open our eyes to behold its wonders. Let the Word of Christ dwell in us richly in all wisdom, and may it be made profitable unto us by the Holy Spirit for doctrine, conviction, correction, and instruction in righteousness. -- *Amen.*

Hymn, *or Psalm xc.*

While with ceaseless course the sun  
Hasted through the former year,  
Many souls their race have run,  
Never more to meet us here:  
Fix'd in an eternal state,  
They have done with all below;  
We a little longer wait,  
But how little, none can know.

As the winged arrow flies,  
Speedily the mark to find;  
As the lightning from the skies  
Darts, and leaves no race behind;  
Swiftly thus or fleeting days  
Bear us down life's rapid stream:  
Upward, Lord, our spirits raise;  
All below is but a dream.

Thanks for mercies past receive;  
Pardon of our sins renew;  
Teach us, henceforth, how to live  
With eternity in view.  
Bless thy word to young and old;  
Fill us with a Saviour's love;

And when life's short tale is told,  
May we dwell with Thee above!

## JOHN I.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2. The same was in the beginning with God. 3. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. 5. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. 6. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. 8. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. 9. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. 10. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. 11. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. 12. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13. Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. 14. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth. 15. John bare witness of him and cried, saying, This was he of

whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me; for he was before me. 16. And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. 17. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. 18. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father he hath declared him.

### COLOSSIANS I. 16-20.

For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him: 17. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist: 18. And he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence: 19. For it pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell: 20. And (having made peace through the blood of his cross) by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.

See also Job xxxviii.; Ps. civ.

## *Prayer.*

Again we come to Thee, our reconciled Father in Christ, believing that Thou art the hearer of prayer. Thou hast said to us in thy great mercy, that if we, being evil, know how to give good gifts to our children, how much more wilt Thou, our Father in heaven, give good things to them who ask Thee. Hear us as we cry to Thee! Thou hast forbid us to be over-anxious about any thing, as if Thou didst not care for us; but in every thing by prayer, and supplication, with thanksgiving, to let our requests be made known to Thyself: and thy peace which passeth understanding will keep our mind and heart through Christ Jesus. Lord, we believe; help our unbelief!

We enter another year, trusting to Thee the Lord our God. We know not whether we are to live or die ere it ends, be in sickness or health, in adversity or prosperity: but what Thou hast in Thy wisdom concealed, we would not in our ignorance desire to know. We desire only to know Thee, to trust Thee, to obey Thee and in all our ways to acknowledge Thee. Thou, Lord, knowest all persons and all things in the universe, and rulest over all. We are not lost in this great crowd of life, but are ever in thy presence. "The hairs of our head are all numbered." Thou knowest all our sins, all our infirmities, all our sorrows, all our temptations and difficulties, and we rejoice in this: for never would we shut up our hearts against Thee, believing in thy good will toward us. Thou who didst not spare thine own Son, how

wilt Thou not with Him freely give us all things? Lord, we are thine; save us! Into thy hands we commit ourselves -- soul, spirit, and body -- all that concerns us, and all whom we love. Undertake for us. The Lord reigneth; let the earth be glad! We are weak, but Thou art strong; perfect thy strength in our weakness. We are ignorant, but Thou art wise; be pleased to guide us in a right way, and in thine own way, to the city of our eternal habitation. We know not what a day or an hour may bring forth, but Thou knowest all; fulfil thy promise, that as our day is so to us may our strength be. Whatever else Thou art pleased to take from us, O never take from us thy Holy Spirit; whoever may forsake us, do Thou, Lord, abide with us, and help us that we may never forsake Thee. In our day of sorrow may we ever find peace in Thyself; in the day of our prosperity may we still hold fast our confidence in Thee as our portion, and never seek our life in the abundance of the things which by thy providence we may possess. May our life be hid with Christ in Thee, so that when He who is our life shall appear, we may appear with Him in glory. O good Shepherd of Israel, lead us into thy green pastures, and nourish our souls; give us repose of spirit beside thy still waters. May thy goodness and mercy follow us all the days of our life; thy rod and staff support and comfort us in the valley and shadow of death; and may we dwell in thy house for ever. Hear us for the sake of Him, in whose words we sum up our petitions: "Our Father" &c. *Amen.*

-----

# MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

## MONDAY.

### *Morning.*

There is but a step between me and death.

When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return.

Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am.

For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding.

The graves are ready for me.

1 Sam. xx. 3. Job xvi. 22. Ps. xxxix. 4. Heb. xiii. 14. I Chron. xxix. 15. Job xvii. 1.

### *Evening.*

So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.



For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave  
who shall give thee thanks?

I must work the work of him that sent me, while it is day:  
the night cometh when no man can work.

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for  
there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the  
grave, whither thou goest.

For the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate  
thee.

Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me,  
O Lord God of truth.

Ps. xc. 12.    Ps. vi. 5.    John ix. 4.    Eccl. ix. 10.    Isa. xxxviii. 18.    Ps. xxxi. 5.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as  
I do this day:

Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward  
receive me to glory.

The Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he  
withhold from them that walk uprightly.

For in him we live, and move, and have our being.

For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death.

For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

Isa. xxxviii. 19. Ps. lxxiii. 24. Ps. lxxxiv. 11. Acts xvii. 28. Ps. xlviii. 14. Phil. i. 21.

*Evening.*

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.

Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.

The righteous is taken away from the evil to come.

For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

There the weary be a rest.

Ps. cxvi. 15. Num. xxii. 10. Isa. lvii. 1. 2 Cor. v. 1. Rev. xiv. 13. Job iii. 17.

WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first.

Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

1 Cor. xv. 55.    1 Thess. iv. 16.    Rev. xx. 6.    2 Cor. v. 4.

*Evening.*

He that judgeth me is the Lord.

For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

Watch ye therefore and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.

Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.

1 Cor. iv. 4.    1 Thess. v. 2.    Luke xxi. 36.    James v. 8.    1 John ii. 28.    1 Thess. v. 6.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

The heavens shall pass away with a great noise and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,

Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God?

Be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

Worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness.

2 Peter iii. 10, 11, 12.    1 Peter iv. 7.    Rev. xiv. 7.    Acts xvii. 31.

*Evening.*

Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for a new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.

For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.

But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance.

2 Peter iii. 13. Luke xxi. 27, 34, 35. 1 Thess. v. 4. Col. iii. 24.

## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

Live soberly, righteously, and godly, in the present world.

Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,

That ye be not soon shaken in mind.

Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth.

For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

Titus ii. 12. 2 Thess. ii. 1, 2. Col. iii. 2, 3, 4.

*Evening.*

Be patient therefore brethren, unto the coming of the Lord.

Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and the latter rain.

Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

That ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

James v. 7.

Titus ii. 13, 14.

1 Cor. i. 8.

1 Thess. iv. 18.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.

The judgment of God is according to truth.

For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.

Heb. ix. 27. Rom. ii. 2. Eccles. xii. 14. Rom. xiv. 12. Rom. xiv. 10. Mark xiii. 33.

*Evening.*

But of that day and that hour knoweth no man.

For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch.

Watch ye therefore; for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning:

Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping.

And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.

For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God.



Mark xiii. 32, 34, 35, 36, 37.      1 Peter iv. 17.

# THE HOME PREACHER, OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

## SECOND WEEK.

### MORNING WORSHIP.

O God, who has caused Thy Holy Word to be written for our learning, open our understanding, that we may understand the Scriptures; dispose our hearts to receive Thy truth in the love of it; and so order our steps that we may walk evermore in the light, and rejoice in it; that so, when this life is ended, we may at last attain to the light of a cloudless day, and have the fruition for ever of Thy glorious Godhead, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

### HYMN, or *Psalm lxxiii.*

O God of Bethel! By whose hand  
Thy people still are fed;  
Who through this weary pilgrimage  
Hast all our fathers led:  
Our vows, our pray'rs, we now present  
Before thy throne of grace:  
God of our fathers! Be the God  
Of their succeeding race.

Through each perplexing path of life  
Our wand'ring footsteps guide;  
Give us each day our daily bread,  
And raiment fit provide.  
O spread thy cov'ring wings around,  
Till all our wand'rings cease,  
And at our Father's love'd abode  
Our souls arrive in peace.

Such blessings from thy gracious hand  
Our humble pray'rs implore;  
And Thou shalt be our chosen God,  
And portion evermore.

### GENESIS III.

Now the serpent was more subtile than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? 2. And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: 3. But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. 4. And the serpent said unto the woman, ye shall not

surely die: 5. For God doth know, that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened; and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. 6. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat. 7. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons. 8. And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. 9. And the Lord called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? 10. And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. 11. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? 12. And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. 13. And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. 14. And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field: upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.

17. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life: 18. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. 19. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. 20. And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living. 21. Unto Adam also, and to his wife, did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them.

*Prayer.*

Almighty Father, who hast of Thy great goodness cared for our souls, and when Thou hadst redeemed us by the gift of Thy Son, didst also provide us with opportunities of seeking and communing with Thee through Thy Holy Spirit; we bless Thee for having raised us from sleep this morning in peace and safety, and for bringing us together before Thee, as one family, desiring to know Thee, and to serve Thee, and to worship Thee, in the way which Thou has opened to us through Jesus Christ.

O God, we are not worthy thus to approach Thee: for our own hearts testify against us that we have sinned greatly against Thee; and Thou art greater than our hearts, and knowest all things. Not in ourselves, O Lord, not in ourselves, but in Thy manifold and great mercies, would we place all our hope. Wash us from the stain of all our guilt in the blood of that immaculate Lamb which was slain to take away the sin of the world. Accept us, not for what we are, but for what He is; and enable us to offer to Thee an acceptable worship, on this Thy holy day, through the merits and mediation of our blessed Saviour.

O God, the sins of the past week, and of all the years of our life, lie heavy upon us; and when we look to the future, we can promise nothing for ourselves; for we are altogether weak and helpless, and compassed with sin. O Lord, we are oppressed: undertake for us. Give us day by day, and this day especially, Thy Holy Spirit; that we may be raised from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, and enabled to show forth, in word and act, the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvellous light.

O Father of mercies who hast given us Thy holy Sabbath to be the rest of wayfaring men in their pilgrimage through this world, and has consecrated it to such an excellent mystery, that in it is represented to us the rest and felicity of a world not yet manifested; grant us grace so to use and so to improve its sacred hours, that it may bring us

nearer to Thee, and advance us on our journey towards Thine eternal home. Be with us in our worship this day, both in private, in the family, and in the congregation; make Thy Word real to us, and seasonable, and comforting; and may we so call upon Thee, and so praise and magnify Thy holy name, that we may be accepted as living members of that Communion of Saints, which is the blessed company of all faithful people.

Thou seest, O God, the secrets of all hearts. Thou understandest, as man cannot, the condition, and the disposition, and the need of each one of us; even before we ask, Thou, our Father, knowest what we have need of. Do for each one of us that which Thou, in Thy wisdom and grace, shalt judge best. Correct all that is evil in us; strengthen and confirm that which Thou hast been pleased to communicate of good. Take away the spirit of carelessness, and the spirit of indolence, and the spirit of dis-obedience and unbelief; and grant to us more and more that Holy Spirit who is purity, and peace and strength, and love.

Into Thy hands, O God, we would commend ourselves, and all who are dear to us, for this day, and for the days to come. Leave us not, neither forsake us, O God of our salvation. In Thy light alone can we see light. O give us grace so to seek and to find Thee in this life, that in the end we may see Thee as Thou art, know Thee even as we are

known, and rejoice for ever in the light of Thy countenance,  
through Jesus Christ, our only Mediator and Redeemer.

*Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O God, infuse into our hearts Thy heavenly light and blessed love, that we may love Thee above all things, and so abhor our own selfish and sinful souls. O let us find Thee more in our own hearts, and believe in Thee as being with us more than any one else; that so we may be more circumspect how we think, resolve, and act in the presence of our holy Lord and most loving Father in Christ. *Amen.*

HYMN, or *Psalm xliii.*

Come, Holy Ghost, Eternal God,  
Proceeding from above,  
Both from the Father and the Son,  
The God of peace and love.

Visit our minds, into our hearts  
Thy heavenly grace inspire;



That truth and godliness we may  
Receive with full desire.

Thou art the very Comforter  
In grief and all distress;  
The heavenly gift of God most High,  
No tongue can it express;

The fountain and the living spring,  
Of joy celestial;  
The fire so bright, the love so sweet  
And unction spiritual.

O Holy Ghost! Into our minds  
Send down thy heavenly lights;  
Kindle our hearts with fervent zeal,  
To serve God day and night.

Such measures of thy powerful grace,  
Grant, Lord to us, we pray;  
That thou mayst be our Comforter  
At the last dreadful day.

## MICAH VI.

Hear ye now what the Lord saith; Arise, contend thou before the mountains, and let the hills hear thy voice. 2. Hear, ye, O mountains, the Lord's controversy, and ye strong foundations of the earth: for the Lord hath a controversy with his people, and he will plead with Israel. 3. O my people, what have I done unto thee? And wherein have I wearied thee? Testify against me. 4. For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of servants; and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron and Miriam. 5. O my people, remember now what Balak king of Moab consulted, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him from Shittim unto Gilgal; that ye may know the righteousness of the Lord. 6. Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? 7. Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? 8. He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

LUKE XIII. 1-9; 23-30.

There were present at that season some that told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. 2. And Jesus, answering, said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things? 3. I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. 4. Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? 5. I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. 6. He spake also this parable: A certain man had a fig planted in his vineyard: and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. 7. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none: cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground? 8. And he, answering, said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, til I shall dig about it and dung it: 9. And if it bear fruit, well; and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down. 23. Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, 24. Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. 25. When once the Master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand

without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know not whence ye are: 26. Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. 27. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are: depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. 28. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you your-selves thrust out. 29. And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. 30. And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.

-----

## SERMON II.

“PURE RELIGION, AND UNDEFILED, BEFORE GOD AND THE FATHER, IS THIS, TO VISIT THE FATHERLESS AND WIDOWS IN THEIR AFFLICTION, AND TO KEEP HIMSELF UNSPOTTED FROM THE WORLD.”

-- St. James i. 27.

Most men have some religion. They do something, or they intend to do something -- they feel something, or they hope some day to feel something -- which may recommend them to God's favour, or (as it is often expressed) which may make their peace with God. It may not be much -- it may amount to little in appearance, and less, far less, when it is weighted in God's balance -- but most men, I repeat it, have some religion. The heathen man, the barbarian, the very savage, is not destitute of some religion: how much less, surely the most ignorant, or the most thoughtless, of the members of a nominally Christian family!

St. James appears to have had a strong sense of the importance of making men reflect upon the nature of that religion to which they are trusting for safety. He knew well the deceitfulness of man's heart; how prone it is to accept the easier instead of the truer service, the softer and more indulgent rather than the straiter and thornier way to life: and therefore he devotes a large portion of his brief Epistle to cautions against deception and self-deception; against walking through this world with a false hope, and awakening in the next with "a lie in the right hand." That is the subject of the portion from which the test is taken. Take heed, he says, lest thou be only hearers of God's Word, and not doers. It is an easy thing to sit in the congregation, and let the sound come to us: it is an easy thing to say, "I like to hear the Gospel; it does me good; it

comforts and reassures me; it refreshes my weariness, and sends me on my way rejoicing:” and it is *not* an easy thing to carry it into one’s life; to do things, and refuse to do things, because of what we have heard; to say tomorrow to your favourite sin, “I will not yield to this, because God has forbidden it; “ to say tomorrow to some difficult, some long-neglected duty, “Cost me what it may, I will go through with this, because I heard yesterday that Christ my Saviour commanded it -- that thus I can show my love to Him who for me died and rose again.” That is the difference between a hearer of the word and a doer: and St James goes on to say, that there is as little good in hearing without doing, as in looking at our own faces in a glass. We behold ourselves, and go our way; the image vanishes with our departure, and the whole thing is obliterated alike from the mirror and from the memory. What we ought to do is to “look into the perfect law of liberty”, into that blessed Gospel which tells us what our privilege is, and what our work is, as God’s free men, “and to continue therein;” not to pass on, after one glance, but to stay and ponder it well, and then to go forth with it stamped upon our hearts.

After this general precept about hearing and doing, St. James mentions one particular danger of the Christian hearer. Nothing seems to have been so strongly present to him, as the dread of an unbridled tongue. He has almost a whole chapter upon that one subject. Here he speaks of it

as one of the most fruitful forms of self-deceit. A man may “seem to be religious;” he may attend the house of God with regularity; he may have prayer, and family prayer, at home; he may talk as if he believed in Christ, and regarded Him as his Master; and yet all may be in vain, because he “bridles not his tongue.” That man, he says, “deceives his own heart.” “that man’s religion is vain.” A very serious warning for all of us! It leads the apostle just to express briefly, before he passes on, what is, and what is not, true religion. “Pure religion, and undefiled, before God and the Father, is this; to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.”

St. James is not speaking here of the root and spring of all religion, in a penitent and believing heart. He is speaking of the outward action of religion. The word he uses here for “religion” is not the word for piety or devotion within, but the word which expresses God’s outward and visible service. It is as though he would say, “You think much of ceremonies and acts of worship; you think yourself safe, because you frequent church, because you are attentive to forms of devotion, or because you can talk well of duty and of the Gospel: let me tell you, What God looks for, as the manifestation of faith and acceptance, is something different from any or all of these things; God’s outward service now is not punctuality of attendance on the ordinances of religion -- though that attendance is right, and

want of it a bad, a fatal sign; but it is a life marked by two signs -- by the sign of a self-denying charity, and by the sign of a self-denying unworldliness.” 1. “To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction.” 2. “To keep one’s self unspotted from the world.”

1. To some, the notion of visiting any one out of mere kindness may possibly be a new thought.

We all go visit our *friends*: some of our pleasantest hours have been spent in that occupation. Those who can receive us at their tables, amuse us with their conversation, or charm us by their kindness -- it needs no word of God to bid us visit *them*: do not even sinners do the same?

But even our friends are not so attractive to us in *sorrow*. When they are sick, and have no wish for merriment; when they have lost a relation, and their windows are darkened, and we feel that any subject but one will be distasteful to them, and for that one subject we ourselves have but little inclination; then who has not known the difficulty of forcing himself to the home of suffering? Who has not again and again postponed the exertion, and made it at last rather to avoid reproach, than out of a spontaneous loving choice?

And yet even such an exertion as this is less than what the text demands of us. It evidently bids us to go not only to *friends though* they are in trouble, but to *strangers because* they are in trouble.



There are many subjects upon which we might profitably meditate at this time; but few could come more home to us all than that which is suggested by this brief maxim of St. James. God grant that it be not lost upon us! It ought to make us ask ourselves, "If this which he says is indeed religion, what do I know of it? Did I ever visit an orphan or a widow in their affliction? Did I ever enter a house of mourning, not on business, not for my own ends, not out of friendship, but in the simplest sense of all, for charity? Out of mere kindness? In the hope of carrying comfort there? In the desire to help and to cheer, to say a kind word, and to relieve the monotony of sadness? Sometimes, in my worst moments, I have even scoffed or mocked at sorrow: I have even turned widowhood into a jest, or trifled with the defencelessness of the orphan: it may be that I have even carried my boisterous mirth into the home of misery and made mourning doubly mournful by the presence of a godless and a sinful merriment. But when did I ever do what St James here speaks of -- visit the fatherless or widow in their affliction, out of mere sympathy, kindness, and charity? If I have not done this, St James says, I am not religious. I may have had moments of serious impression; in my own sicknesses I may have thought upon God; in my own sorrows I may even have listened for a gospel: but tried by this test, which is God's

test, I have not yet begun to practise that kind of religion which is pure and undefiled before God and the Father.”

It is not only rough, boisterous, riotous men, who are open to the charge of wanting this pure religion. Alas! Too many of us, too many of the more constant and hopeful worshippers, have done nothing yet in this work of Christian, of Christ-like charity. But it must be done -- done, not only by the minister, but by his people also, if they would be a people fearing God, honouring Christ, and working righteousness. Gospel “faith worketh by love.”

2. There is a second mark of pure religion. “To keep himself unspotted from the world.” How expressive is this language! “Unspotted from the world.”

What is the world? The world, in this sense, is whatever is not heaven; not God-like, not holy, not spiritual, not eternal. It includes many things which are sometimes distinguished from it. All that is seen and temporal, first of all, as opposed to that which is unseen and eternal. Then, all that is attractive to the eye, all that draws out that vanity, that desire for admiration, which is in all of us: whatever tempts us to pride and self-conceit and earthly ambition: whatever thirsts in us for wealth or luxury or self-satisfied indolence: whatever finds its enjoyment in appetite and passion, in pleasures of sin. Yes, the world is a large place, and full of various lures and snares. It is the opposite of heaven: the charge in the text is as wide as this

-- “to keep himself unspotted from everything which is not of God, which is not of heaven.”

If our souls were laid open to view, as our bodies are, how ashamed should we all be of these “spots” upon them of which St. James speaks! Every sin, if it be but in thought, leaves its spot behind upon the soul. Some of us, if seen as God sees us, are no better than lepers; covered all over, in soul (as a prophet says), “with wounds and bruises and putrifying sores,” that cannot be “closed, nor bound up, nor mollified with ointment.” It is of mercy that we are *not* seen quite as we are. It would make us loathe one another, and it would make us desperate for ourselves. God alone can both *know all, and yet love*. Which of us has not sometimes felt, as he prayed to God, the comfort of this universal knowledge? The comfort of being with One from whom nothing is hid; with whom there can be no hypocrisy; who sees our exact condition, and yet is willing to take us into his own Almighty hands for healing?

In itself it is a dreadful thing to have upon us these spots of defilement from sins old and recent. Every falsehood we have ever told; every passionate word we have ever spoken; every profane oath ever sworn; every lust of the flesh cherished in thought or indulged in act -- is a “spot” from the world: what have we done, what are we doing, to get it washed out? There is but one application strong enough and pure enough to effect that cleansing; and

that is what Holy Scripture calls “the *blood* of sprinkling:” “the *blood* of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.” O that all of us may from this day forth try to get our spots of sin washed out, washed off from our souls in that blood, that precious blood! It is very near to us: it is always and everywhere accessible: humble, earnest, simple, believing prayer is the hand that receives it for the souls’s cleansing.

Is there any one here for whom it is not too late to “*keep* himself unspotted from the world?” any one whose soul is not yet defiled, in the way spoken of, with the spot and stain of sin? Well, let us hope it; and let him, if such there be amongst us, give all diligence to use the only sure means of this *keeping*; prayer -- prayer again -- the same humble, earnest, simple prayer, which we have recommended as the medium of the *cleansing*.

We see every day in our streets too many proofs of the need of St. James’s warning; too many examples of men *not* unspotted, but readily and eagerly staining themselves with the world in its grossest and vilest forms. O that these might brought to shame and self-reproach, and then to true and deep repentance! If it is too late for them to *keep* themselves *unspotted*, at least it is not too late for them to *get* themselves *washed* from their stains. The fountain for sin and for uncleanness is still open; and blessed is he who in faith and penitence steps down into it.

And this we know, the time is short. Before another new year comes round, some of us now strong and well may be in the coffin and in the grave; gone to our account -- *gone to our account*. And what does that mean? Where shall we *be*? Where shall we, we ourselves, the real, living, immortal self, be then? Surely it is nothing visionary, nothing enthusiastic, to ask ourselves such a question. Surely common sense, right reason, no less than conscience and the Bible, should stir each of us to ask it. The world is ever with us -- close to us, too close -- probably not one in a million is at this moment "unspotted" by it; and how many shall we dare to say are earnestly and faithfully cleansing themselves from its spots? We know not; God knoweth. But remember, this work, whether of keeping or of cleansing, can only be wrought in the individual man; and in him not unconsciously, not by chance, not by some arbitrary, over-mastering, overpowering work of grace, but by his own personal prayers and struggles after forgiveness through a Saviour's merits, after holiness through the Spirit's power.

What is it which keeps us back, day after day and year after year, from Christ and his salvation? Is it that we count it too soon to begin our preparations for a day of reckoning and for an eternity of blessedness? Is it that we are secure of lengthened life? Secure, too, of that power to turn, which sometimes (Scripture and experience seem alike

to tell us) fails a man before breath fails him? Or is it, once again, that we count ourselves *unworthy* of so high an honour? that we know that against ourselves which vitiates the invitation, and constrains us to disregard it? O, if there be such a thing in us, let us not defer to get rid of it! Let us count it our enemy, if it is Christ's enemy; let us make the great struggle, and cast it out; let us call in his aid, who is "stronger than the strong man armed," and can "take away his armour." Nothing will ever make us happy which displeases and dishonours our Saviour -- which constrains us to refuse his summons and to forego his salvation. Let one hearty prayer go up to Him before we retire; and let it be repeated morning and night, night and morning, from this day forward till we find it answered - "Lord, wash me from my sin in Thy precious blood! O God, whose nature and property is always to have mercy and to forgive, receive my humble petition; and though I be tied and bound with the chain of my sin, yet let the pitifulness of Thy great mercy loose me, for the honour of Jesus Christ, my Mediator and my Advocate." *Amen.* -- C. J. Vaughn, D. D.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

THE CHILD SAMUEL.

In these days God speaks to us in His Word. The lessons of his book are so full and plain, that we do not need any other guide. But in the times of old God spoke to men raised up for this end, and sent them to tell the people what God had bid them speak. Many of their words have been written down in the Bible for our use. God took different ways of speaking to the prophets -- ways we cannot quite explain; but we may be sure that always they were made to know that it was God that spoke to them, and what his message was. Yet I am now going to tell you of a prophet, who, the first time God spake to him, did not know the Lord's voice. That was when he was a little child, and I am almost sure you have seen a picture of him on his knees, with his little hands folded, looking up to God. As I am writing this, I look round, and see a little image of him in this posture. I ask a little girl by my side who that is, and she tells me it is Samuel.

Now, to give a little change to a story that is, perhaps, better known to young children than a good many other Bible stories, I will ask you to suppose Samuel when an old man taking a little boy on his knee, and telling him what happened to himself. This might be the way he would give the story: --

“I had a good mother. She gave me my name because she asked God to give her a child to love and watch over,

and I was born to her. My name means, 'asked of God.' I am an answer to a prayer. You may be sure my mother loved me very much, yet she did not let me live with her after I was three years old. You will wonder at that; but the reason was that my mother had said to God that if he would give her a boy to be dear to her, she would lend him all his days back to God. So, when I was very young, she brought me to Shiloh. That was the place where the ark of God then dwelt under its tent. God's house was there at that time. The priest, at the time I was brought to Shiloh, was an old man. His name was Eli. He was a good man, but he had sons who did much sin in the sight of the Lord, and their aged father was not firm enough in telling them of it, and rebuking them. I tell you this, because the first time God spoke to me he gave me a sad and terrible message about them, which all has come, or will yet come, to pass. I was still a child when this took place. I served at the house of God, and I was very happy. My mother came to see me once a year along with my father, and she brought me, when she did so, a new coat. You cannot doubt that I was glad to see them, and to get their blessing. I liked the new coat made by my mother's hands. But I liked for other reasons a linen ephod that I wore, for it was a sign of my being a servant of God. I loved the good old Eli, and he loved me much, and kept me near himself night and day. I



used to sleep in a room not far from his chamber. So if he wanted me, and called me, I would be ready to hear.

“Now, one night I had gone to my couch as usual, and was laid down to sleep. Eli had gone to his place also; but the lamp was still burning in the holy tent. It was then that I heard a voice calling me, clearly but gently, by my name. I said, ‘Here am I,’ and rising up, ran to where the good old priest was, and asked him what he wished me for. He said, “My son, I did not call; lie down again.” So I went back to my bed and lay down. But a second time I heard the voice, saying, ‘Samuel!’ and quite sure that I had made no mistake this time, I started up and ran again to Eli, asking why he called me, for I had heard my name distinctly. He said, ‘No, my child, I did not call you, I do not need you; lie down to sleep again.’ I did as he bade me, but ere long the voice spoke again. For the third time I ran to Eli and said, ‘You must have called me; I heard my name once more, and I am sure I could not be mistaken.’ Then the old man paused as if he were thinking deeply, and finding something in all this that he had not supposed before. I knew afterwards what he now thought the voice to be. Indeed, his answer showed his thoughts; for he told me to go and lie down, and if the voice should come again and call my name, I was to say, ‘Speak, Lord, for thy servant hears.’ The voice did come again, and said, ‘Samuel! Samuel!’ I felt now that someone was near me, that it was God, and I said, ‘Speak, Lord, for

thy servant hears.’ He then gave me an awful message, how he was going to punish the house of Eli for their wickedness. It was very solemn to hear it, and I felt that it would be very dreadful to tell it to the old priest. However, I could not help telling it. I lay still till the morning, and then got up and opened the doors of the sanctuary. As I was coming back from doing this, Eli called me very tenderly, and when I went to him, he said, ‘Now, my son, tell me all that God said to you last night.’ So I told him the very words. I watched his face as I was speaking, and it grew very grave and sad; but when I had finished saying what awful judgments God was to bring upon his house, he only bowed his head, and said meekly, ‘It is the Lord, let him do what seems good to him, he can do no wrong.’ A while after that when God was pleased to give me many messages for the people, there broke out war between Israel and the Philistines, and Eli’s sons would take the ark of God into the battle. The battle went against them; they were killed, and the ark was taken; and when a runner brought the news to Eli, as he sat in the gate, he fell back at the mention of the ark, and died.

“Such was the way in which I heard the voice of God first; I have heard it often since. I expect soon to hear it in another way, calling me to his presence above. My child, God calls you by his word. Will you hear Him? Will you be

his servant? I never was sorry that I was taught to serve Him when young.”

-----

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Can you name a child that well knew God's voice in the Holy Scriptures?
2. Can you name a man who gave his blessing to two boys when he was very old?
3. What was the name of Samuel's mother?
4. Where did she pray the prayer that God answered by giving her Samuel?
5. Who took the ark of God away from Shiloh, and where was its resting-place?
6. Who took it to Jerusalem?
7. Which of the sons of Aaron was the forefather of Eli?
8. Which of Eli's descendants was the last priest of his house?
9. Do you remember any cases in Scripture in which God called persons by their name, speaking out of heaven?
10. Can you name persons besides Samuel who said to God, "Here am I."

11. Do you know what things without life are finely represented in scripture as saying to God, “Here are we.”

12. Where are we told of Samuels death?

ANSWERS to the foregoing questions will be easily found by consulting 2 Tim. iii; Gen. xlviii.; 1 Sam. i. vi., vii.; Ps. cxxxii. (2 Sam. vi., 1 Chron. xvi.); 1 Kings ii. (Gen. xxii., Acts ix.); (Gen. xxii., Isa. vi.) Job xxxviii.; 1 Sam. xxv.

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE LESSONS.

1. Who tempted Adam and Eve?

2. What was the punishment threatened to our first parents for transgression? Gen iii. 3.

3. How did the devil, the liar and the murderer, contradict God? Gen. iii. 4.

4. State some of the consequences of the fall? Gen. iii. 17, 18, 19.

5. Who tempted Jesus Christ?

6. What were his replies to the first, second, and third temptations?

7. Is temptation itself sin in us?

8. Is the yielding to it alone the sin?

9. What is the real source of the evil and its dangers in temptation? James i. 14.

10. What has God promised to those who are tempted, and who resolve to do his will? 1 Cor. x. 13.

11. In what power are we to resist and overcome temptation? Eph. vi. 10, 11.

-----

*Prayer.*

**O** God, who givest answer to prayer, hear us now. Open our hearts to attend to thy Word. Make us thy servants, swift to hear Thee, and obey thy voice. Cause us to know well the voice of the good Shepherd, and to hearken to it always. Let us fear to offend Thee. Let us love to please Thee. Make us gentle, true and holy, like thy servant of whom we have been reading -- like the blessed Jesus. We ask it for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

-----

**EVENING WORSHIP.**

O God, whose inspiration giveth to man understanding, and who didst bestow upon thy servants of old gifts of wisdom and knowledge and utterance, vouchsafe thy grace to us who are here assembled before thee, that our meditation may be unto edification and profit, to the increase of our knowledge and faith and obedience, to our comfort and growth in grace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, or *Psalm xci.*

Ere another Sabbath's close,  
Ere again we seek repose,  
Lord! Our song ascends to Thee;  
At thy feet we bow the knee.

For the mercies of the day,  
For this rest upon our way,  
Thanks to Thee alone be given,  
Lord of earth, and King of heaven!

Cold our services have been;  
Mingled every prayer with sin;  
But Thou canst and wilt forgive;  
By thy grace alone we live!

Whilst this thorny path we tread,  
May thy love our footsteps lead!  
When our journey here is past,  
May we rest with Thee at last!

Let these earthly Sabbaths prove  
Foretastes of our joys above;  
While their steps thy pilgrims bend  
To the rest which knows no end!

#### MATTHEW IV. 1-11.

Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil. 2. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered. 3. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. 4. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. 5. Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, 6. And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up,

lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. 7. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. 8. Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the of them; 9. And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. 10. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve.

#### 1 CORINTHIANS X. 11-13.

Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. 12. Wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. 13. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

#### 2 CORINTHIANS XI. 3.



But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

#### JAMES I. 12-17.

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. 13. Let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: 14. But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. 15. Then, when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. 16. Do not err, my beloved brethren. 17. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

#### EPHESIANS VI. 10-13.

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. 11. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against

principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. 13. Wherefore, take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

*Prayer.*

O FATHER of mercies, and God of all comfort! Who didst give for us Thy Son Jesus Christ to be the sacrifice for our sins, and the author of everlasting life; look down in compassion upon us Thy servants, here gathered before Thee at the close of Thy holy day.

Thou, O God, hast done great things for us; we would give Thee thanks and praise for Thine inestimable love in our redemption by Christ Jesus, for all the means of grace, and for the blessed hope of glory.

But, O Father, we have dealt thanklessly with Thee, and have not honoured Thee, nor served Thee, nor obeyed Thee, as we ought to do. This very day has seen us wanderers from Thee; our worship has been lukewarm and

lifeless; our very prayers might justly have been punished by Thee as sins.

We come to Thee, in the remembrance of these things, ashamed and self-accused; and we trust not in ourselves, but only in the merits and mediation of Him whom Thou in Thy mercy hast made to be sin for us, and in whom even the most sinful may find forgiveness and acceptance before Thee. Forgive us, Almighty God, the sins of this day and of our former life; lay them not to our charge, deal not with us in judgment, but of Thy great goodness wash us in the blood of Thy Son Jesus Christ, and renew us with the life-giving grace of Thy Holy Spirit.

Accept, we pray Thee, the prayers this day offered before Thee in all the congregations of Thy militant church. Grant that Thy Name may be known upon earth, Thy saving health among all nations. Grant that we who know the truth may evermore be watchful to keep and do it, that the light may shine before men, to the glory of Thee our Father in heaven.

And now, O Lord, we commend ourselves, our souls and bodies, to Thy gracious keeping through the darkness and silence of the approaching night. Let the thoughts of our hearts, in seclusion and solitude, be evermore pleasing in Thy sight, who seest in secret. Grant that no dangers may approach us, whether in body or spirit. May our last thoughts be of Thee; and if it should please Thee to call us

this night to meet the Lord, whether in death or at His advent, grant that we may be ready for that last summons, and be enabled to say, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”

These things, and whatsoever else Thou seest to be needful for us, we humbly ask in the name and for the sake of our blessed Saviour; to whom, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, be honour and glory, world without end. *Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

*Morning.*

**And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM.**

The Lord is known by the judgment which he executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Higgaion. Selah.

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.

Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.

Know that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us.

Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God.

Exod. iii. 14.

Ps. ix. 16

Ps. xix. 1, 2.

Ps. c. 3.

2 Cor. i. 21.

*Evening.*

**Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.**

God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord.

One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

Thou, whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art the most High over all the earth.

Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the Lord he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else.

Matt. v. 48. 1 John i. 5. Deut. vi. 4. Eph. iv. 6. Ps. lxxxiii. 18. Deut. iv. 39.

TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**I am the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt know no god but me.**

Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.

I, even I, am the Lord; and besides me there is no saviour.

Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy.

Lord God of Israel, there is no God like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants that walk before thee with all their heart.

Hos. xiii. 4. Isa. xliii. 10, 11. Mic. vii. 18. 2 Chron. vi. 14.

*Evening.*

**He is the living God, and steadfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end.**

Him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation.

God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

Ye should turn from those vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein.

For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God.

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Dan. vi. 26. Dan. iv. 34. John iv. 24. Acts xiv. 15. 1 Thess. i. 9. Heb. x. 31.

WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**No man hath seen God at any time.**

There shall no man see me, and live.

Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.

And he made darkness pavilions round about him, dark waters, and thick clouds of the skies.

Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour.

Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known.

John i. 18. Exod. xxxiii. 20. John v. 37. 2 Sam. xxii. 12 Isa. xlv. 15. Ps. lxxvii. 19.

*Evening.*

**Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?**

His greatness is unsearchable.

Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out.

Which doeth great things and unsearchable; marvellous things without number.

How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

Thy judgments are a great deep.

Job ix. 7.    Ps. cxlv. 3.    Job xxxvii. 23.    Job v. 9.    Rom. ix. 33.    Ps. xxxvi. 6.

THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity.**

The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.

Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of his understanding.

Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.



Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy  
dominion endureth throughout all generations.

But the Lord shall endure for ever.

Isa. lvii. 15. Deut. xxxiii. 27. Isa. xl. 28. Ps. xc. 2. Psalm cxlv 13. Ps. ix. 7.

*Evening.*

**For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday  
when it is past, and as a watch in the night.**

My days are like a shadow that declineth; and I am  
withered like grass.

But thou, O Lord, shalt endure for ever, and thy  
remembrance unto all generations.

I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my  
days; thy years are throughout all generations.

But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.

Behold, God is great, and we know him not, neither can  
the number of his years be searched out.

Ps. xc. 4.

Ps. cii. 11, 12, 24, 27.

Job xxxvi. 26.

FRIDAY

*Morning.*

**For I am the Lord, I change not.**

The Father of lights, with whom is no variableness,  
neither shadow of turning.

God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of  
man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do  
it? Or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?

Trust ye in the Lord for ever.

In the Lord put I my trust: how say ye to my soul, Flee  
as a bird to your mountain?

For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

Mal. iii. 6. James i. 17. Numb. xxiii. 19. Isa. xxvi. 4. Ps. xi. 1. Rom. xi. 29.

*Evening.*

**Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God  
afar off?**

Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I  
flee from thy presence?

If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my  
bed in hell, behold, thou art there.

If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the  
uttermost parts of the sea;

Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand  
shall hold me.

If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the  
night shall be light about me.

Jer. xxiii. 2, 3.

Ps. cxxxix. 7,8,9, 10, 11.

## SATURDAY

*Morning.*

**For the Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not person, nor taketh reward.**

Because I will publish the name of the lord; ascribe ye greatness unto our God.

He is the Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth, and without iniquity; just and right is he.

Behold, the Lord our God hath shewed us his glory, and his greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire: we have seen this day that God doth talk with man, and he liveth.

Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness.

For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself.

Deut. x. 17.

Deut. xxxii. 3, 4.

Deut. v. 24.

Ps. cl. 2.

Heb. vi. 13.

*Evening.*

**Shall not his excellency make you afraid? And his dread fall upon you.**

With God is terrible majesty.

Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all.

His work is honourable and glorious: and his righteousness endureth for ever.

He hath made his wonderful works to be remembered: the Lord is gracious, and full of compassion.

I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously.

Job xiii. 11.    Job xxxvii. 22.    1 Chron. xxix. 11    Ps. cxi. 3, 4.    Exod. xv. 1.

# The Home Preacher, or Church in the House

Third Week

## MORNING WORSHIP.

O THOU who didst on the first day of the week raise up Thy Son our Redeemer from the grave, that our faith and hope might be in Thee, grant that through the Eternal Spirit who dwelt in Him we may be strengthened to bury the old man, and with Jesus rise in newness of life. O grant to us a true and constant faith in Thy Son as the Resurrection and the Life, that we may never die. *Amen.*

HYMN, or *Psalm li. 6-10.*

O FOR a principle within  
Of jealous, godly fear;  
A sensibility of sin,  
A pain to feel it near.

That I from Thee no more may part--  
No more thy goodness grieve--  
The filial awe, the contrite heart,  
The tender conscience, give.

Quick, as the apple of the eye,  
O God, my conscience make!  
Awake my soul when sin is nigh  
And keep it still awake.

O may he least omission pain  
My well-instructed soul;  
And drive me to the blood again,  
Which makes the wounded whole.

#### GENESIS IV. 1-12.

And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord. 2. And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. 3. And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. 4. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: 5. But unto Cain, and to his offering, he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. 6. And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? 7. If thou doest well, shall thou not be

accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him. 8. And Cain talked to his brother Abel; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him. 9. And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not. Am I my brother's keeper. 10. And he said, What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. 11. And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand. 12. When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength. A fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.

#### GENESIS VI. 5-6, 11-12

And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. 11. The earth also was corrupt before God; and the earth was filled with violence. 12. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt: for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.

-----

*Prayer.*

ALMIGHTY GOD, on this morning of thy holy day we enter thy presence with reverence, and with deep humility prostrate ourselves at thy footstool. Thou art great, and greatly to be feared. If with folded wings angels veil face and feet when they stand before thee, crying, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts! the whole earth is full of his glory, what language is humble, and what attitude lowly enough for us, miserable sinners -- sinful dust and ashes? Look on us in the face of thine anointed Son. Be gracious unto us. Regard us with pity and kindness with thy favour and thy love. Be pleased, O God, to show thyself on the mercy-seat, and extend to us thy golden sceptre, saying, What wilt thou?--what is thy petition, and what is thy request? --it shall be granted thee.

O Lord, we are poor and needy. No beggar ever knocked at our door in such rags, so wretched, and so poor, as we. But blessed by thy name, from thy door none are turned away. To thee we cannot go too often, nor ask of thee too much. Though we may weary man with our petitions, we cannot weary thee, nor exhaust thy bounty -- the blessings of thy providence, and the abundant riches of thy grace. How great is thy mercy! It is above the



heavens; thy faithfulness is a great deep; brighter than the sun is thy truth; a river summer never dries nor winter freezes, thy bounty flows on perpetually; and as expressed to us in thy Son -- in the gift of thy only Son, the blood he shed on earth to redeem us, the mansions he prepared in heaven to receive us -- thy love passeth knowledge. O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!

May thy Holy Spirit encourage and enable us by the thought of these things to approach thee not doubting, but believing. Create in us that childlike confidence which honors thy faithful word, and will gratify thy loving, fatherly heart. Our souls need to be quickened, because they cleave to the dust; and revived and strengthened also, because they are ready to be cast down; for we have sinned, grievously sinned -- all of us, without any exception.

And who can understand his errors? We confess ourselves to have broken all thy holy laws in thought, word and deed. How often have we set at nought thy counsel, denied thy Son, grieved thy Spirit, broken our vows, forgotten our promises, and returned to our sins like the dog to his vomit, like the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire? Breaking the law in many things, and coming short of thy glory in every thing, the number of our sins is greater than we can reckon. And how great their guilt, committed, as they have been, against the clearest light and

greatest mercy! Surely wert thou to deal with us according to our deserts, it were better for Sodom and Gomorrah, for Tyre and Sidon, for the vilest heathen, in the day of judgment than for us. O enter not into judgment with thy servants, for in thy sight no flesh living can be justified. As for us, we are without excuse. We can say to none, Stand by thyself, come not near unto me; for I am holier than thou. Such language would ill become our lips; and having nothing to plead but thy mercy and our own misery, we confess that wert thou to refuse our petitions, saying, I spake and ye would not hear, I called and ye would not answer, now, when you speak I will not hear, and when you call I will not answer --depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, into the fire prepared for the devil and his angels -- we would be dumb, opening not the mouth. In such a dreadful sentence we should receive nothing but our deserts. Having sown the wind, we might justly reap the whirlwind.

From the depths of guilt we cry unto thee, O Lord. Blessed be thy name, that we, who have been great sinners, have in Jesus a great Saviour. Be pleased in his blood to wash away our sins; for his sake to pardon our iniquity. The burden is heavier than we can bear! Father of mercies, why should we perish? Thy hand is not shortened that it cannot save, nor is thine ear heavy that it cannot hear. Thou art waiting to be gracious. Thy voice implores sinners to turn, and thine arms are opened to embrace every

returning penitent. Melted by thy love, may we throw ourselves at the foot of the cross, crying, Father, we have sinned; cast our sins behind thy back, and remember them no more forever. Be merciful unto us, O God, be merciful unto us!

For these and such other good and holy ends, visit us this day with the outpouring of thy Spirit. May we be in the Spirit on the Lord's day; and let all the ordinances of thy house and worship be to us, and others also, the channels of converting, renewing, sanctifying grace. Go up with us to the house of prayer -- let thy will fill the temple -- make glorious the place of thy feet. Give us such gracious revelations of thyself as are to be seen in the face of Jesus; create in us such lively faith, such holy longings, such heavenly desires, and so satisfy us with the goodness of thy house, that we may be ready to say, It is good for us to be here -- a day spent in thy courts is better than a thousand others.

Nor bless us only, but all worshipping assemblies throughout the world. Wherever two or three meet in the name of Jesus, in whatever tongue, according to whatever form, on whatever shores thy worship, be thou in the midst of them, to bless them and to do them good. Be this a day of joy among the angels in heaven over multitudes of sinners turned from the error of their way. Let every minister who preaches, and teacher who teaches thy word,

find it accompanied with thy power. Enlightened by thy Spirit and the truth with their eyes opened to their danger, may many cry, O what shall we do to be saved: and while the lost flee to Jesus, ay his people sit this day under his shadow with great delight, rejoicing in the Lord, and joying in the God of their salvation.

And with grateful acknowledgments of all thy mercies and thy kindnesses that have been of old we present these our prayers at the throne of thy grace. Perfumed with the much incense of Jesus' merits, may they ascend to thee, like the morning and evening sacrifice, and, accepted in the Beloved, return to us in showers of blessings, for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE

O God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, vouchsafe unto us who now draw near to thy presence the aids of thy heavenly grace, that we may worship thee with contrite, faithful, and obedient hearts; and grant that we may be acceptable in thy sight, and may receive our petitions; for we present our supplications before thee in his name, who is

great High Priest of our profession, our Mediator and Advocate, Jesus Christ. --*Amen*.

## PARAPHRASE XLVI.

Vain are the hopes the sons of men  
Upon their works have built;  
Their hearts by nature are unclean,  
Their actions full of guilt.  
Silent let Jew and Gentile stand  
Without one vaunting word;  
And, humbled low, confess their guilt  
Before heav'n's righteous Lord.

No hope can on the law be built  
Of justifying grace;  
The law, that shows the sinner's guilt,  
Condemns him to his face.  
Jesus! How glorious is thy grace!  
When in thy name we trust,  
Our faith receives a righteousness  
That makes the sinner just.

## PSALM XIX. 7-14.

The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple: 8. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes: 9. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. 10. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and the honeycomb. 11. Moreover, by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward. 12. Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults. 13. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. 14. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer.

## ZECHARIAH III.

And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand

to resist him. 2. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? 3. Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. 4. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. 5. And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord stood by. 6. And the angel of the Lord protested unto Joshua, saying, 7. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by. 8. Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou and thy fellows that sit before thee; for they are men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant The Branch. 9. For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be seven eyes; behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day. 10. In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine and under the fig-tree.

-----

### SERMON III

“CLEANSE THOU ME FROM SECRET FAULTS;  
KEEP BACK THY SERVANT FROM PRESUMPTUOUS  
SINS; LET THEM NOT HAVE DOMINION OVER ME.”

--Psalm xix. 12, 13.

A SIGHT of danger, which offers no hope of escape, though in the first instance it often fells a man to the ground, stunning and stupifying him, is usually followed by a sullen resignation. This appears in the story of that unfortunate Indian who perished in Niagara. Asleep, or otherwise forgetful of his perilous situation, he had allowed himself to be caught in its rapids; nor was roused to a sense of danger till his bark was hurrying on with an arrow's speed to the fatal cataract. The spectators on the bank who had followed him, shouting till their voices were drowned in the roar of waters, saw him rise; look round on his position; and, taking in all its danger at a glance, discover that no



power on earth could save him. On making so terrible a discovery, he neither tore his hair, nor beat his breast, nor broke out into any expression of frantic grief. He raised no cry, made no sign, pulled no oar; but with the calm resolution and passive courage of his race, he lighted his pipe, and sitting down, folded his arms to await the issue -- in a few minutes more, as he calmly anticipated, to be shot over the cataract, and whelmed in its boiling gulf.

Lost sinners though we are, and in the greatest jeopardy, we have an assured and blessed hope of salvation through the mercy of the Father and the merits of the Son. But, as sin and guilt are hurrying us on to perdition had we no one, so to speak, on the bank who could not only save, but save to the uttermost -- save as Jesus did the thief on the cross, who he plucked from the very jaws of the second death -- many would meet their fate, as the Indian met his. Where efforts to save ourselves were manifestly fruitless, none would be made by us -- any more than they were by him. Not only so, but some might rush on their doom anticipating it; as they did in that burning ship where the survivors of the catastrophe saw husband and wife, locked in each other's embraces, and parents who had clasped their children to their bosoms, ere yet the fire had reached or the waters had risen to engulf them, throw themselves over-board, leap from the deck into their ocean grave. So did Judas. Stung by remorse, and descrying on the dark

cloud of his guilt no bow of hope, he gave himself up to despair, and, anticipating his fate, plunged into perdition before his time. In many cases besides his, such would be the effects produced by convictions of guilt that were unaccompanied with any hope of mercy. But as the rainbow spans the storm-cloud, let a hope of Divine mercy accompany the darkest, deepest, most dreadful sense of guilt, and how different the result.

Were I drowning, and saw a man on the shore, my first instinctive act would be to cry to him; to stretch out my hands, and implore his help. Despair is dumb, meeting its fate in sullen silence; or if it speaks, it is, with the lips of Job's wife, to curse God and die. Hope, on the contrary, speaks; but speaks to pray and live. When the Jews, under Peter's preaching and the out-pouring of the Spirit, were overwhelmed with a sense of sin, regarding their case as dreadful though not desperate, the whole assembly burst into the cry, "Men and brethren, what must we do;" and when, like a sunbeam shooting through the barred window and lighting up the gloom of some lonely dungeon, hope entered the gaoler's soul, casting away the sword which he had drawn to sheathe in his own breast, he called for a light, and rushing forward to throw himself at the feet of Paul, he cried, "What must I do to be saved?" And when the apostle himself at his conversion, though overwhelmed by a sense of guilt, got hold of hope, it was a life-buoy in his

hand -- this the blessed issue as described in God's words to Ananias, "Behold, he prayeth!" In perfect harmony with these experiences is that of David in my text. His convictions of guilt are mingled with hopes of God's mercy; and so, feeling that he has no cause to despair, he turns to God with this prayer on his lips, "Cleanse thou me from secret faults; keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins."

This prayer teaches us many lessons, among others, these: --

I. *From God we should seek purification from the guilt of sin.*

We can remember the day when, in the simplicity of childhood and in our ignorance of the facts and discoveries of science, we thought any one could touch the moon who stood on the crest of the mountain where, before setting, she seemed to rest. Yet such, we know, is the distance of the heavenly bodies, that though one stood on the world's highest snowy pinnacle, they would appear as far removed as they seem to be from the darkest valley or the deepest mine. Although, indeed, we were to rise on angels' wings, and travel upward and onward till, like the port the ship has left far astern, our world had dwindled to a little speck, vanishing at length from view, there are stars that still would be sparkling over our heads unchanged -- as much to

our eyes mere points of light as they seem to one who stands on the level of our shores.

“Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.”

Such was the call to which Abraham responded on departing from his native land. Years rolled on, and brought the fulfilment of that promise apparently no nearer. His faith, as was not wonderful, began to fail, and in words that sounded like a complaint, he said to God, “I go childless.” One night, as he lay on his couch, Jehovah suddenly appeared to him, turning the darkness into light; and thereafter he conducted his servant outside the curtains of the tent, beneath the starry sky. To reassure him, to restore his faith and present some idea of the countless multitudes who should boast themselves of his blood, and speak of him throughout all ages as “our father Abraham,” God said to this childless man, “Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them -- so shall thy seed be.” And did I wish to raise a desponding soul to some adequate idea of God’s love and mercy, I would resort to a similar device; and taking him out beneath the same sky, would remind him of the immeasurable loftiness of

these celestial luminaries, and that not I, but God himself, has declared his mercy to be higher than they. In the gift of his only -begotten and well-beloved Son, there is ample ground to justify the words of the Psalmist, “Thy mercy is above the heavens,” and also those of Paul, “The height and depth, the breadth and length of the love of God, which passeth knowledge.”

No doubt, in this psalm David says, “Who can understand his errors” -- reckon the number, or estimate the guilt of his sins? Still, though our sins be so great, the mercy of God is greater. Do they pass knowledge? Still more does the love of Christ. Has sin abounded? Grace has much more abounded. Have we committed sins of all degrees and shades, from the lightest scarlet to the deepest crimson? The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin. In this fountain, filled from Emmanuel’s veins, which God has opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, sins are lost, and souls are saved. There, and nowhere else, God is found, and is to be sought, as the Lord God merciful and gracious, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin. He who has opened the fountain invites us to come -- to wash and be clean. And who goes down there, the greatest sinner plunged beneath that flood, rises, like the Syrian leper from the depths of Jordan, cleansed.

II. *From God we should seek deliverance from our secret sins.*

1. By secret sins we may understand those that are unknown even to ourselves.

When the darkness has parted combatants are to renew the fight, whether the battle raged on the open field, or thundered on the deep, or girt with fire the beleaguered city, night recruits the broken regiments, repairs the gaping breach or clears the deck of spars and wounded men and bleeding corpses, for to-morrow's action. The pause and opportunity are improved for making all ready to resume the combat with advantage. In that as in many things else, the children of this world show themselves wise in their generation. With a wisdom not less marked, though much less common, some of God's people have been in the habit of closing each day with a careful review of its events -- examining into what sins they have fallen, in what duties they have failed, where and how Satan, the world, and the flesh have obtained advantage over them. Sin has made a breach through which she may pour her forces on the morrow -- that must be closed and defended; so that when the enemy cometh in like a flood, the Spirit may lift up a standard against him: silently and insidiously approaching, some sin has lodged itself within the heart -- it must be cast out; lest it prove dangerous as the single soldier who, scaling the wall, or in the confusion of the assault getting within the city, waits till the garrison are asleep to open the postern, and admit the enemy. The Christian in Satan has

to fight a foe who unites the cunning of a serpent to the strength and ferocity of a lion; and in dealing with such an enemy we cannot be too careful to ascertain into what sins we have fallen, not only with the view of seeking their pardon through the application of the blood of Christ, but also of strengthening ourselves on those points where experience teaches us that we are not strong, but weak. The strongest fort that stands perched on the summit of a beetling crag, or rises from the plain with ditch and glacis, rampart and bastion, has its weak point; and there in times of danger guards are doubled and cannons bristle thickest. Even so the holiest saint out of heaven has besetting sins against which he requires to be ever on his guard -- watching and praying that he enters not into temptation. He who would keep his garment clean and his conscience void of offence both toward God and man, needs to know his weak side and wayward tendencies. And who that does, will trust himself? Who will confide in his own strength, any more than in his own righteousness, who has acquired the self-knowledge of him who said -- "I have heard of thee with the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee: wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

God says, -- "I will search Jerusalem with candles;" and imitating as well as anticipating his scrutiny, so ought Christians to search not only the habits and actions of their lives, and of their whole lives, but -- what other eyes never

saw -- the inmost recesses and chambers of their hearts. Yet in this, as in every other Christian exercise, imperfection will characterize our best and holiest efforts. The most complete examination leaves much undiscovered -- many sins eluding our search; the most full confession leaves much unconfessed -- many sins escaping our recollection. Well may the Psalmist ask, "Who can understand his errors?" Unconsciously as well as unintentionally we may deceive ourselves -- mistaking falsehood for truth, evil for good, and wrong for right. Jehu was not singular in thinking himself animated by "zeal for the Lord," when he was only impelled by his own passions, and aiming at the gratification of unhallowed ambition; and many others, besides Saul of Tarsus, have flattered themselves that they were doing God service, when they were animated by the spirit of the world, and injuring, if not persecuting, the cause of Christ. And though we never so deceived ourselves as to call sweet bitter and bitter sweet, the sins which we can remember are as nothing to the number we have forgotten; and which, unnoticed or unremembered, may, so far as even our own knowledge is concerned, be called "secret faults." Were these to be made as apparent to us as are the spots on the sun to him who turns the telescope on its brilliant disc, were our eyes so anointed with the eye-salve of the Spirit as to discern all the stains that defile even our purest services, how impure



would they seem? Not ministering to our pride, they would minister to our humiliation, and send us to the throne of grace and the blood of Jesus with the prayer, -- "Cleanse thou me from secret faults -- from sins which the world never suspects, and which are unseen by all eyes but those that are as a flaming fire -- bringing hidden things to light, and penetrating the deepest recesses of the heart."

2. By secret sins we may understand those which are hidden from the knowledge of others.

Here, said Achan, talking to himself, is "a Babylonish garment, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold." Seized by a guilty thought, he casts a hurried glance around -- the dead are there, staring on him with their glassy eyes; none else. He listens -- no sound of approaching steps, nor any sound falls on his ear, but the distant roar of battle as it goes surging through the streets of Jericho. He seizes the forbidden spoil, hides it, and, hurrying to his tent, buries it with all his anxieties in the ground; never so much as dreaming that from that grave it will one day rise, and, justifying the lot, condemn him to his face. "Be sure your sin will find you out," was as remarkably and no less terribly illustrated in the fate of Ananias and Sapphira, whose only care had been to conceal their fraud, and invent a story, which, deceiving men, might pass current in the church. And what are Achan, Ananias, and Sapphira, but types of many whose great object is to

please not God, but men; and who live regardless of the foulness and estrangement of their hearts, content if they can make and maintain a fair outward religious profession. They have no wish to be delivered from secret sins; nor, however they may use the words, is it from their hearts they pray -- "Cleanse thou me from secret faults." On the contrary, their secret sins are sweet to them as stolen waters; dear as his gold to the miser who conceals it beneath his rags. Some deceive themselves; but these sail under false colours, -- deceiving others, but not themselves.

Perhaps the most perfect, and therefore repulsive specimens of this class, were those Pharisees on whose heads both John Baptist and our Lord launched their loudest thunders. How pious they seemed -- kneeling at the corners of the public streets! How charitable -- when sweeping the ground with their phylacteries, they took their way through the thoroughfares sounding a trumpet less to call the poor to receive, than men to notice and praise, their charity. How tender-hearted -- when, leaving others to go to the house of feasting, they repaired to the widow's desolate abode, and with her orphans kneeling round them, commended the bereaved to the care of God! Hypocrites! Whited sepulchres, beautiful without, but within full of dead men's bones and of all uncleanness! They prayed; but it was to rob the widow and her children of their little all. They distributed charities, but it was that the trumpet they

blew might sound their own fame. Instead of retiring into their closet and shutting the door, to address Him who seeth in secret and rewardeth openly, they went to their knees on the public street; but it was to make of the character for sanctity they won a stepping-stone to their ambition, and thereby rise to the chief seats in the synagogue. Their humility was the stoop of a tiger; and their piety, like a drum, owed its loudness to its hollowness.

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites,” said our Lord; “ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter that the outside of them may be clean also.” The mild eyes out of which mercy beamed on the penitent woman, and tears fell in pitiful showers on the guilty city, flashed fire on this vile hypocrisy. Insulted, Jesus answered not a word at Pilate’s bar; he stood patient beneath the cruel pelting of the storm; reviled, he reviled not again; hated, he loved; cursed, he blessed; crucified, he breathed out a prayer for them who nailed him to the tree. But the sight of men covering their secret sins, masking the vilest passions under a sanctimonious profession, stirred his indignation to its depths; and the lips which prayed, “Father forgive them, they know not what they do,” discharged on their heads these burning words, “Ye serpents, ye

generation of vipers, how shall ye escape the damnation of hell?”

From sins which, because unknown to others, are the most dangerous to ourselves, we cannot too earnestly pray both to be cleansed and to be kept; seeking that, while the God of hope gives us all joy and peace in believing, the God of peace would sanctify us wholly, and write over our hearts an inscription copied from the gate of heaven -- Here entereth nothing nothing to hurt or to defile! Against all those whose secret faults which lie in unhallowed wishes and desires, in our feelings and affections, it behoves God’s people to be most on their guard; crushing sin in the egg, and putting out the hell-sparks before they are fanned into a raging fire. It is in the heart that the battle of faith is to be fought and to be won. Who by God’s grace and help conquers there, is like one who has taken the citadel, and turns its guns on the town. Victory is easy when the heart is won. On it, therefore, we should turn our chief attention; keeping it with all diligence, searching it with the closest scrutiny and dragging from their concealment all secret sins, to slay them before the Lord. And not satisfied with that, lest any root of bitterness should have escaped our notice, let us appeal to the Searcher of hearts, praying -- “Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”

III. *From God we are to seek to be restrained from presumptuous sins.*

What are presumptuous sins? We may sin in ignorance -- falling into error in our search after truth; or, to take another example, from a diseased conscience, or imperfect understanding, or an exaggerated estimate of the less weighty matters of the law, we may create division in Christ's church, and rend our Lord's garment to the grief of his heart. So unfit is man that walketh to direct his own steps, that we may commit the greatest crimes out of a mistaken zeal and sense of duty. Paul thought he did God service when he embrued his hands in Stephen's blood; as many besides, and since, have done, who persecuting the church, have persecuted Christ himself. But sins of ignorance do not belong to the class of presumptuous sins. Neither do those sins into which God's people may be said to be surprised when overwhelmed by sudden temptation, and caught in the "devices" of him who -- bolder than "the spider that taketh hold with her hands, and is in king's palaces" -- spreads his nets in the house of God; lies concealed within the fences of a communion table; and lurks in the corners of the closet which is consecrated to piety, and hallowed by prayer. What place is too sacred for Satan not to enter? What hole too small for this serpent not to creep in at? Elsewhere than in the chamber of Delilah the alarm may be raised, "The Philistines be upon thee,

Samson:" and not till the Christian, passing the bounds of time, has entered the gates of the celestial city, is he safe to relax his guard; to venture anywhere with the whole armour of God; to sheathe his sword till, putting forth his remaining strength, he sheathes it in the body of his last living sin, and, falling a conqueror into the arms of death, is borne off the field of battle, away to the rest that remaineth for the people of God.

"If any man," says God by Moses, "come presumptuously upon his neighbour to slay him with guile, thou shalt take him from mine altar that he may die." The case of Joab, whose bravery excites our admiration, and whose long and sorely tried fidelity to David excites our sympathy, furnishes a painful illustration of that passage. Such was his sin, and such his punishment. It looks a harsh and bloody thing that on that bed commonly sacred to forgiveness, his dying master should have in Joab condemned to death one who had often exposed his own head in battle to protect David's life, and save David's crown. There were many reasons why he should let Joab go down to the grave in peace. The two were sisters' sons; the old warrior's grey hairs pled for him and more powerfully still, the scars of many a wound suffered in the king's service; he was the bravest of the brave, and stood by his master in the darkest hours of his life the truest of the true. Besides , there was much in David's own situation that pled

for Joab. He was on his dying bed -- the grave where all animosities are buried was opening to receive him; and about to enter the presence of his Judge, there was blood on his own hands -- making a stain of darker hue than Abner's. But the voice of God's law was peremptory. Joab had slain Abner, and also Amasa, in cold blood, while he took the latter by the beard to kiss him and say, Art thou in health, my brother? -- stabbing him to the heart. An outrageous, and deliberate crime, this was killing "presumptuously;" and therefore, according to the stern sentence of the law, Joab was dragged from God's altar to die.

Reading, therefore, this passage of the Psalms in the light of that passage of the law, we are taught to regard those as presumptuous sins which are wilful, deliberate, heinous transgressions; and if any case could warn us against these, what sounds so loud a warning as that of him whose dying lips consigned Joab to death? If Joab's were presumptuous sins, how much more those which in David's fall cast the blackest shadow on the Church's fairest saintship! Remember Lot's wife, said our Lord: remember David, says the saddest passage of his or of any other saintly life. Against such sins -- sins that inflict the deepest wounds on Christ's cause, and cast the darkest cloud on the believer's peace and comfortable evidence of conversion -- we cannot too earnestly pray, nor too sedulously watch. With this wail, the cry of David's broken heart in his ear,

Be merciful to me, O God, cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me;" let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall -- giving constant heed to the exhortation, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist steadfast in the faith." -- Thomas Guthrie, D. D.

---

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

### THE CHILD JOASH.

In the first of these Bible stories you read about a kind heathen princess that took charge of a little child of a Hebrew family, at a time when all the boy-babes of the Israelites were doomed to die, and gave him a royal education in her own palace. You are now to hear of a princess in Jerusalem, who was very cruel and wicked, who sought to kill all the children of her own son, and who only failed in the carrying out of her bad design by the escape of a little infant that was hidden from her rage.

The name of this bloody woman was Athaliah. She was the daughter of Ahab, king of Israel, who did so much to lead his people into sin, and bring the wrath of God down on them. She was married to Joram, king of Judah, and she



led him to do evil in the sight of the Lord. After this king's death, Athaliah used her power with her son Ahaziah, and he followed in his parents' steps. At this time, God raised up a man to cut off the guilty house of Ahab from the throne; and King Ahaziah having gone to see the king of Israel, he was slain along with him. A number of his brethren, going afterwards to see the court of Israel in Samaria, were killed by the same avenger. It was then that the ambition and cruelty of Athaliah showed itself. Hearing that her son was dead, she thought she would get all the power of the kingdom into her own hand, and to make sure that she would have no rival, she took means to destroy all the royal seed. Some of her own grandchildren were among those that were slain. Having thus, as she thought, got rid of every one that could lay claim to the throne, she set herself to reign, not according to God's law, but like a wicked idolatrous as she was, and for six years she seemed to have all things her own way. But she did not know that God had saved one to be king, and that in a short time her bad life would come to an end.

King Ahaziah had a sister who was married to Jehoida, the priest of the Lord. He had also an infant son, about a year old, at the time of his death. Now, when the aunt of this little child knew what the cruel Athaliah was doing, murdering all persons of the royal house, she ran secretly, and got him and his nurse out of the palace and hid them in

one of the rooms of the temple, where the priests lived. Here the child grew up till he was a boy of some seven years of age. All that knew about his being alive, and where he was, kept the secret, and the bad queen never heard about it. But when he was seven years old, the brave good priest, Jehoiada, thought that the time was come for showing the people that they had still a king. The whole land was getting weary of the rule of the woman that had “waded through slaughter to a throne.” The hour was ripe for doing, and the friends of young Joash (for that was the royal child’s name) resolved to act.

Jehoiada laid his plans with care and skill. He no doubt asked God to guide and help him. For he was about to remove the wicked, that God’s house and God’s worship might be restored. At the end of the week the guard that watched the temple used to be changed. One band went out when another came in. Thinking that he could trust these men, that they were brave and true friends, one sabbath day he kept the company that were to go home when the others had come, and having now two troops, he set them both to keep the doors and passes into the temple. Before this he had shown them the little son of the late king, and made them take an oath to serve him. Then he armed a number of bold Levites, whom he was quite sure he could count on, and gave them the task of keeping round the king and defending him from all harm. So when the morning rose -- it

would be the first day of the week -- they were all in their places, ready to at their parts. Jehoiada then brought out the boy Joash, set him on a seat in the temple cours, which were filled with the armed bands ranged in order, and put the royal crown on his little head. He placed a copy of the law of Moses in his hands, to tell him by what rule he was to order his reign. Then he poured the holy oil on his head and pronounced him the lawful king of the people of Judah, the chosen people of the Lord. At that point all that were standing round about set up such a shout of joy! The trumpets were blown, and the Levites and guards, and the whole throng, clapped their hands and cried, "God save the King." How must that little boy have felt, when he saw and heard all this, and knew that he had escaped a cruel death meant for him when he was a babe, and had been spared to be king in Jerusalem! Surely he was very thankful to good Jehoiada, and to God.

Perhaps, however, he was a little afraid when he saw the fierce queen break in among the troops that were around him. She had heard the shouts raised by the people, and gathering some of her own guard about her, she rushed forth to find out what was the meaning of the noise. She got in as far as to see what was going on. She saw the crowned boy beside a pillar, with the priest by his side, and the armed Levites and others round about him. So she cried out, "Treason, treason!" rending her clothes in grief and

anger. But they did not mind her cries. At the priest's word the armed men laid hold of her; and because he would not have her slain within the courts of the house of God, they took her out by the horse-entry, and slew her outside. Thus the murderess met her doom, and the land was delivered from her wicked reign. The good priest set eagerly to work to bring the people back to the service of the true God, the God of their fathers, whom they had forsaken. He destroyed the house of Baal, the idol that Athaliah taught them to worship, and brake the images of this false god in pieces. He led the king back in glad procession to the palace, and the city was filled with joy. He afterwards repaired the temple, and restored the worship of God, and as long as he lived everything went well. I am sorry to say that after the good old man died the king allowed himself to be led away by evil flattering advisers; became a follower of idols; and when a son of Jehoiada brought him a message from God, bidding him repent, he was base enough to cause him to be stoned to death in the very temple where he himself had been crowned. What a fair beginning thus passed away into a miserable end!

You can see the scene that I have been trying to describe in the picture that goes along with this story. Look at the fair boy in the centre -- that is, of course, the young king, with the crown on his head. There are stout armed

men on each hand. On both sides, too, are trumpeters sounding out, to say that the king is on the throne. Before him is the high priest in his robes of office. Notice the mitre on his head, and the jewelled breastplate on his bosom. He is motioning with his hand to take Athaliah away. There she is, the wretched woman, in the hands of her executioners, fierce but helpless, the hour of her judgment come. Ah! Dear children, let it be a sign to you to teach that the pleasures of sin are but for a season, and that the wages of sin is death.

-----

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Who was the heathen princess that took charge of the Hebrew child?
2. Who was it that, like Athaliah, sought to remove a rival from his throne, and a child escaped his rage?
3. Do you remember any other person that committed murder in order to reign?
4. What is the first instance we have of one that slew his own near relative?
5. What was the name of a man who was made lame by a fall, as his nurse fled with him when he was a child?

6. What famous Jewish king, besides Joash, came very young to the throne?

7. What priest of Israel won honour by executing justice with his own hand on open transgressors?

8. Do you remember three great events that took place on the first day of the week?

9. Can you name three wicked kings on whom destruction suddenly came?

10. Do you remember any other king that became a backslider in his old age?

11. Can you name any persons who unthankfully forgot benefits done to them?

12. Who was that great man, a murderer in his time, who was slain at the very altar?

ANSWERS to the foregoing questions will be easily found by consulting Exod. ii; Matt. ii.; 2 Kings, viii.; Gen. iv.; 2 Sam. iv.; 2 Kings, xxii.; Number. xxv. (Gen. i.; Matt. xxviii.; Acts ii.); (Exod. xiv.; Dan. v.; Acts xii.); 1 Kings xi. (Gen. xl.; 1 Sam. xxvi.); 1 Kings ii.

-----

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE LESSONS.

1. What was the first effect of sin in Adam's posterity?

2. What was the effect of sin on the character of the world? Gen. vi. 5.

3. What is the state of the world now before God by reason of sin? Rom. iii. 19.

4. Why are mankind without excuse for not knowing God? Rom. i. 20.

5. Why did Cain slay Abel? 1 John iii. 12.

6. What does God's word call those who live in the habit of sin? 1 John iii. 8, 10.

-----

### *Prayer.*

O Lord our God, the King of kings, and Lord of all nations, we thank thee for our good queen's reign over this land. Preserve long her precious life. Bless her royal house, her children, and grandchildren. Bless all ministers of the gospel, and teachers of the young. Make us willing learners of all that is good. Guide us, while young, in the ways of peace, and let us not leave Thee when we grow old, for Jesus' sake. *Amen.*

-----

## EVENING WORSHIP

Our Father, we thankfully acknowledge Thy great mercy in setting apart this day for the good of our bodies and souls. We thank Thee for giving us rest from our ordinary

labours, in order that we may labour to enter into the rest enjoyed in Thee through faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. Lord, increase our faith; may we walk in the light of Thy countenance, rejoice in Thy Name all the day, and be exalted by Thy righteousness. *Amen.*

HYMN, or *Psalm xvi.* 5-8.

Come, gracious Spirit, heavenly Dove,  
With light and comfort from above;  
Be Thou our Guardian, Thou our Guide,  
O'er every thought and step preside.

The light of truth to us display,  
And make us know and choose Thy way;  
Plant holy fear in every heart,  
That we from Thee may ne'er depart.  
Lead us to Christ, the living Way,  
Nor let us from His precepts stray;  
Lead us to holiness, the road  
That we must take to dwell with God.



Lead us to heaven, that we may share  
Fulness of joy for ever there:  
Lead us to God, our final rest,  
To be with Him for ever blest.

### ROMANS I. 18-22.

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; 19. Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. 20. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and godhead; so that they are without excuse: 21. Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. 22. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.

### ROMANS III. 10-20.

As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: 11. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. 12. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. 13. Their throat is an open sepulchre: with their tongues they have used deceit: the poison of asps is under their lips: 14. Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: 15. Their feet are swift to shed blood: 16. Destruction and misery are in their ways: 17. And the way of peace have they not known: 18. There is no fear of God before their eyes. 19. Now we know, that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. 20. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

### I. JOHN III. 4-12.

Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. 5. And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. 6. Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. 7. Little

children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. 8. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning For this purpose was the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. 9. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. 10. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. 11. For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. 12. Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.

-----

### *PRAYER.*

Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come: thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven. All praise, and honour, and glory, and power be

ascribed unto thee, our Creator, Preserver, and bountiful Benefactor, the God of our salvation, the Giver of every good and perfect gift. On this evening of thy holy day we bend the knee at thy footstool to offer up the sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving. How innumerable are thy mercies! The wings of every hour come laden with blessings from thy bountiful hand. We have been ever drawing on thy goodness, but have never exhausted it; daily putting thy patience to the proof, but have never found it fail; and never though we have often forgotten thee, hast thou forgotten us. In such trials as have befallen us, we have been afflicted far less than our iniquities deserved; our miseries have borne a small proportion to our mercies; our days of sickness to those of health; our losses to our gains; the gifts thou hast resumed to those that remain. Bless the Lord, O our souls, and forget not all his benefits; and among these, on the evening of the Sabbath, and indeed at all times, we would particularly remember, and most gratefully acknowledge, those that belong to our eternal peace. Let all that is within us be stirred up to bless and magnify thy holy name for the glad tidings of salvation; for the gift of redeeming love, Jesus Christ and him crucified; for mercy to the chief of sinners; for the gospel offer, so free and so full; for the Sun that never sets, the bread that never perishes, the health that never sickens, the life that never dies, and the glory

that never fades away, eternal in the heavens. May we all be made partakers of these precious blessings!

For such ends, in the word spoken, on the instructions given, the warnings uttered, the offers made, all the seed of divine truth sown by man's hands, let there descend from on high showers of blessing. Be not, O God, provoked by our sins and shortcomings to withhold or to withdraw thy

Spirit. Deepen every good impression made, strengthen every good resolution formed. Our waiting eyes are toward thee, with whom is the blessing and residue of the Spirit. For faith to believe in thy Son, and for the holiness which is the fruit of thy Spirit, for deliverance from the power as well as the guilt of sin to whom can we go but unto thee? Oh, teach us to put no more trust in our own efforts to sanctify, than in our own merits to justify us. Grant us those heavenly aids, without which we can do nothing; but with which, feeble as in ourselves we are, we can do all things. May it be seen and felt by us that, as there is no guilt so dark but can be washed out through the blood of thy Son there is no heart so hard but can be softened, nor weak but can be strengthened, nor impure but can be sanctified, by the influences and aids of thy Holy Spirit. May he dwell within us; blessing us in the use of all the means of grace. Inspired by him, may we covet the best gifts, and aim at the highest attainments; satisfied with nothing short of being

perfect in love and holiness, as our Father in heaven is perfect. May every day see us fighting the good fight, and keeping the faith -- see some duty over sin achieved; some duties better done; some corruptions mortified; and such constant progress made in the divine life, that our path may be as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

While trusting in thy blessing, may we be found putting forth our utmost efforts, as those who are called and honoured to be fellow-workers with thee. In the daily exercises of watchfulness and prayer, in the daily use of thy precious word, as well as in the hallowing of thy holy day, help us to make the most of our opportunities. O for grace to improve our fleeting time, and run our race as if we heard the step of death behind us, and saw his shadow projected on our path! May we rise every morning to the duties of life as if we heard a voice, saying Work while it is called to-day; the night cometh when no man can work. So living in and to the Lord, when death arrives, may we have nothing to do but die in the Lord--die in hope, die in peace, die in the well-grounded and happy assurance that we leave the world to go to the Father. With ourselves we cast all who are ours on thy loving care. May our families belong to the family of the redeemed. Call, convert, save, and sanctify

every member of them, that there may not be so much as one amissing on the day when Christ makes up his jewels. Well in their hearts and in their homes, suiting both the dealings of thy providence and the gifts of thy grace to their different circumstances; and out of thine exhaustless fulness supplying all their wants. And looking beyond the circle of such as are near, or peculiarly dear to us, we pray for all mankind. May the light that shines on us soon arise and

shine on every heathen land. Bless all missionaries, and, to whatever Church they belong, all who preach Christ and him crucified. Hold up the hands that hold up the cross. The sick do thou heal; prepare the dying for death; spare useful lives for further usefulness; and give those who are in trouble of body, or mind, or outward estate, such a sanctified use of their trials that they may have reason to say, It was good for me that I was afflicted.

Grateful for all the mercies of the day, we commit ourselves to thy keeping through the night. Bless our couch with sleep. With quiet rest recruit our strength and with thy grace refresh our souls; fitting us for the duties of another day. And ascribing all glory to the Father, and the Son and the Holy Ghost, we beseech thee to hear and answer us for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

MONDAY.

*Morning.*

**Talk no more exceedingly proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed.**

Dost thou know the balancings of the clouds, the wondrous works of him which is perfect in knowledge?

Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite.

The eyes of the Lord preserve knowledge; and he overthroweth the words of the transgressor.



Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or, being his counsellor, hath taught him?

1 Sam.ii.3.      Job xxxvii. 16      Ps. cxlvii. 5.      Prov. xxxii. 12.      Isa. xl. 13.

*Evening.*

**The secret things belong unto the Lord our God.**

Then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his

ways, whose heart thou knowest; for thou, even thou only, knows the hearts of all the children of men.

I am God, and there is none like me:

Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.

Therefore, judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart; and then shall every man have praise of God.

Deut. xxix. 29.      1 Kings viii. 39.      Isa. xlvi. 9, 10.      1 Cor. iv. 5.

**TUESDAY**

*Morning.*

**O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me.**

Thou knowest my down-sitting and mine up-rising:  
thou understandest my thought afar off.

Thou compassest my path, and my lying down, and art  
acquainted with all my ways.

For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord,  
thou knowest it altogether.

Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine  
hand upon me.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I  
cannot attain unto it.

Ps. cxxxix. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

*Evening.*

**Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my  
heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and  
my redeemer.**

Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and  
know my thoughts:

And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me  
in the way everlasting.

But thou, O Lord, knowest me: thou hast seen me, and tried mine heart.

The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity.

For all these things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.

Ps. xix. 14.      Ps. cxxxix. 23, 24.      Jer. xii. 3.      Ps. xciv. 11.      Isa. lxvi. 2.

### WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Thou, Lord God, knowest thy servant.**

The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.

Return, we beseech thee, O God of hosts: look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine.

I have seen his ways, and will heal him; I will lead him also, and restore comfort unto him, and to his mourners.

Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.

2 Sam. vii. 20.      Ps. xxxiv. 15.      Ps. lxxx. 14.      Isa. lvii. 18.      2 Tim. ii. 19.

*Evening.*

**I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience.**

Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of  
before ye ask him.

Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat?  
Or, What shall we drink? Or, Wherewithal shall we be  
clothed:

(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek;) for  
your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all  
these things.

And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of  
my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry.

Rev. ii. 2.

Matt. vi 8.

Matt. vi. 31, 32.

Exod. iii. 7.

THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength: who hath  
hardened himself against him, and hath prospered?**

Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his:

He giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding:

He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.

O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!

Job ix. 4.

Dan. ii. 20, 21, 22.

Rom. xi. 33.

*Evening.*

**Behold, he put no trust in his servants; and his angels he charged with folly:**

How much less in them that dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, which are crushed before the moth?

Men do therefore fear him: he respecteth not any that are wise of heart.

That frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise men backward and maketh their knowledge foolish.

Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

Job iv. 18, 19.

Job xxxvii. 24.

Isa. xliv. 25.

1 Cor. i. 25.

## FRIDAY.

### *Morning.*

**God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this that power belongeth unto God.**

Lo, these are parts of his ways but how little a portion is heard of him? But the thunder of his power who can understand?

The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.

The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars; yea the Lord breaketh the cedars of Lebanon.

What God is there in heaven or in earth that can do according to thy works, and according to thy might?

Great in counsel, and mighty in work.

Ps. lxii. 1.

Job xxvi. 14.

Ps. xxix. 4, 5.

Deut. iii. 24.

Jer. xxxii. 19.

### *Evening.*

**What? Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?**

For he maketh sore, and bindeth up; he woundeth, and his hands make whole.

In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.

But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? And what his soul desireth, even that he doeth.

For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him.

Therefore am I troubled at his presence: when I consider, I am afraid of him.

Job ii. 10.

Job v. 18.

Job xxiii. 13, 14.

SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.**

It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out

the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in.

In his hand are the deep places of the earth; the strength of the hills is his also.

The sea is his, and he made it; his hands formed the dry land.

I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power, and by my outstretched arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me.

Gen. i. 1.

Isa. xl. 22.

Ps. xc. 4, 5

Jer xxvii. 5.

*Evening.*

**For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him.**

The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him.

But I trusted in thee, O Lord: I said, Thou art my God.  
My times are in thy hand.

Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.

I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy sin.



2 Chron. xvi. 9.    Ezra viii. 22.    Ps. xxxi. 14, 15.    Ps. lxiii. 7.    Isa. i. 25.

# Home Preacher, or Church in the House

## FOURTH WEEK

### MORNING WORSHIP

FATHER of Mercies! Give unto each of us here present what is best for us; cast out all evil from within us; fill us with all good and grant us true wisdom and spiritual understanding in the knowledge of Thyself, that so we may be fruitful in every good work, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm cxxx.*

To Thee I come, a sinner vile;  
Upon me, Lord, vouchsafe to smile!  
Mercy alone I make my plea;  
O God, be merciful to me!

To Thee I come, a sinner great,  
And well Thou knowest all my state;  
Yet full forgiveness is with Thee;  
O God, be merciful to me!

To Thee I come, a sinner lost,  
Nor have I ought wherein to trust;  
But where Thou art, Lord, I would be;  
O God, be merciful to me!

To glory bring me, Lord, at last;  
And there, when all my fears are past,  
With all the saints I'll then agree,  
God has been merciful to me!

#### GENESIS VI. 7-17.

And the Lord said, I will destroy man, whom I have created, from the face of the earth; both man and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air: for it repenteth me that I have made them. 8. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. 9. These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man, and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God. 10. And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. 11. The earth also was corrupt before God; and the earth was filled with violence. 12. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. 13. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I

will destroy them with the earth. 14. Make thee an ark of gopher-wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. 15. And this is the fashion which thou shalt make it of; The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits. 16. A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it. 17. And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die.

#### GENESIS VII. 1, 5-7.

And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou, and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation. 5. And Noah did according unto all that the Lord commanded him. 6. And Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth. 7. And Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark, because of the waters of the flood.

See also verses 11-13, 17-24; and chap. viii. 1, 15-17.

-----

*Prayer.*

O GOD, the Father of lights and the Fountain of fulness!  
All our springs are in thee. In thy light alone can we see  
light, and from the treasures of thy love and goodness alone  
can all our various needs be supplied. Blessed are they that  
dwell in thy house, and who in the nearer presence behold  
the shinings of thy glory, and feel the rich fragrance of thy  
grace. Blessed are the angels above. Blessed are the people  
below who know the joyful sound. Yea, blessed is that  
people whose God is the Lord.

O Lord our God, what folly and sin have we been guilty  
of in forsaking thee, the fountain of living waters; and how  
has our sin become our punishment, as we have stood beside  
our broken cisterns that could hold no water; as we have  
wandered in our darkness and poverty away from thee!

O Lord, we know that the pleasures of sin are but for a  
season; that in departing from thee we go into a far country,  
where we soon begin to be in want; that in following  
vanities we forsake our own mercies.

But blessed be thy name for the long-suffering that has  
borne with us, and for the rich grace whereby we are  
recovered and restored. Beneath and around all our poverty  
thou hast put thine own wealth; and beyond our utmost

wanderings has gone thy preventing hand, that we might not perish for ever. And now we would buy of thee gold tried in the fire. Endow us, Lord, with as much as we can receive of the unsearchable riches of Christ. Put on us white raiment that we may be clothed, and anoint our eyes with eye-salve that we may see. Make the conviction deep and strong in us that our sufficiency is of God, and that we can do all things through Christ strengthening us. Let the peace which passeth all understanding keep our heart and mind through Jesus Christ. Let that sweet harmony flow on through our successive days. Let our souls rest for ever under the shadow of the cross; and from that high vantage-ground of peace and safety let us behold all things else. May the glory of the whole world be dim to us now “by reason of the glory that excelleth.” Knowing a Saviour’s love, and cherishing the hope of His immortal glory, may we be the less solicitous about the changing aspects of these present things. May we learn in whatsoever state we are therewith to be content. When temporal things come to an end, may we behold only the vanishing away of that which our souls had rejected as a portion: when eternal things come into view may our faith claim them as her own.

We gratefully acknowledge, O Lord, thy kindness to us in the past. In joys and sorrows that have come and gone we see thy hand, we hear thy voice, even now. Thy

dealings have all been good. And we know that the future, all dark to us, is manifest to thee. We would go to meet it in thy strength. We would entirely trust ourselves to thine unerring wisdom and thy tireless love. The Lord our God will give grace and glory, and withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly.

The future of this great world, also, we commend to thee. Thou lookest down upon all its toils. Thou knowest its bitter sorrows. Thou art very pitiful and patient, even in view of its sins. But how long, O Lord? Roll away the darkness. Hasten the dawn of the better day. Let the early morning rays which we behold grow speedily into brighter shinations. Let the sure promise be fulfilled that all the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of God and of His Christ. “Even so come, Lord Jesus.” *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O GOD, thou hast spoken unto us graciously, and therefore we, although unworthy, may speak unto thee boldly. We humbly ask at this time the grace of thy Holy Spirit, that we may rightly understand, and purely love, and willingly

obey thy most holy Word, which is able to make us wise unto salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, or *Psalm lxxiii. 23-26.*

WHY should the children of a King  
Go mourning all their days:  
Great Comforter, descend and bring  
Some tokens of thy grace.

Dost thou not dwell in all the saints  
And seal them heirs of heaven?  
And wilt thou banish my complaints,  
And show my sins forgiven?

Assure my conscience of her part  
In the Redeemer's blood;  
And bear thy witness with my heart,  
That I am born of God.

Thou art the earnest of His love,  
The ledge of joys to come;  
And thy soft wings, Celestial Dove  
Will safe convey me home.



## ISAIAH LXIII. 7-19.

I WILL mention the loving-kindness of the Lord and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his loving-kindnesses. 8. For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Saviour. 9. In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old. 10. But they rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them. 11. Then he remembered the days of old, Moses and his people, saying, where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? Where is he that put his Holy Spirit within him? 12. That led them by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the water before them, to make himself an everlasting name? 13. That led them through the deep, as an horse in the wilderness, that they should not stumble? 14. As a beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the Lord caused him to rest; so didst thou lead thy people, to make thyself a glorious name. 15. Look down from heaven, and

behold from the habitation of thy holiness and of thy glory:  
where is thy zeal and thy strength, the sounding of thy  
bowels and of thy mercies toward me? Are they restrained?  
16. Doubtless thou art our Father, our Redeemer; thy name  
is from everlasting. 17. O Lord, why hast thou made us to  
err from thy ways, and hardened our heart from thy fear?  
Return for thy servants' sake, the tribes of thine  
inheritance. 18. The people of thy holiness have possessed it  
but a little while: our adversaries have trodden down thy  
sanctuary. 19. We are thine: thou never barest rule over  
them; they were not called by thy name.

See also 2 Cor. i. 12-24.

-----

## SERMON IV.

“WHO HATH ALSO SEALED US, AND GIVEN THE EARNEST OF  
THE SPIRIT IN OUR HEARTS.” -- 2 Cor. i. 22.

“WHO hath *also* sealed us.” He hath done something else,  
as we see in the former verse. He hath “stablished us”  
--rendered us firm and steadfast “in Christ.” He hath also  
“anointed us,” giving us grace of consecration and spiritual  
qualifications for divine service. The radical idea is, that

God gives to believing the grace of constancy and perseverance, so that they hold on their way toward complete and everlasting salvation. The same idea is certainly continued under this image of sealing. But it has at the same time some distinctive characteristics of its own, instructive and beautiful, on which we may meditate for a little with some profit: --

I. OWNERSHIP. -- Those who have the seal of the spirit are, in this way, claimed as God's own property. "Know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself." "They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."

We must not forget that God makes a much larger claim than this. He says, "*All souls* are mine." No man can rightfully hold property in himself. There is not a man on earth, who does not, every day afresh, receive from God his powers, affections, possessions, circumstances -- himself, in fact. That is true. But then, alas! It is equally true that a man of himself, does not see and confess that. The *natural* claim of God on man is valid and good, but it is not acknowledged. If a man had a clear eye, he might see written on the brow of every morning, written that all men may read it there, "Ye are not your own." He might see it still more clearly every time he looks in a mirror. The reflected image of his own face, shining with lights which

only God could kindle, ought to send the message right home to his heart, "Ye are not your own." But alas! How many men see their own faces a thousand times, without perceiving in light, or line, or expression, any mark of the ownership of God! A man looks, and sees -- himself; then thinks, not consciously perhaps, yet with a terrible certainty -- "Myself: proprietor -- myself. I am -- my own. I must take care of myself: no one else will. I must live to myself: there can be no higher end."

Thus God's *natural* right, although inherently valid and good, is actually, owing to our sin, quite inefficacious. Therefore he makes a *super*-natural right. He constitutes a new claim of peculiar strength and tenderness. He buys and wins us back by the most marvellous expression of love and sorrow that has ever been known. We are "the *ransomed* of the Lord." Christians are his "*purchased* possession." "The Lord's portion is his people, and Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." How is the recovered property marked as his own? *By the sealing of the Spirit*. In one view it may be said that he has *many* marks. "The Lord knoweth them that are his" in many ways. Yet in another sense he has only this *one* mark -- the sealing of the Spirit -- because this is the concentrated expression of all the others. All the other marks constitute this one. It is not repentance, and faith, and love, and hope, and joy, and peace, *and* the sealing of the Spirit. But rather, it is the sealing of the Spirit in, and

by means of, these things. These are like the separate impressions produced by different parts of the one broad seal. In this way, we can reason from any part of true Christian experience directly up to the ownership of God. In all we feel, in all we do as Christians, we see the proofs that we are his. A pang of penitential grief is the sealing of the Spirit. A triumph of faith over sense, or an *act* of faith, although not very triumphant, is the sealing of the Spirit. A breath of holier love is the sealing of the Spirit; and all our purer thoughts and our larger affections, and our better purposes, - these are all worked up into one harmonious impression, which makes the seal of God. Grand thought! that we have thus, in all that is Christian within us, the marks of divine ownership - the very seal of God! If this does not dignify our life, it is difficult to see what else can do it.

Ah! to belong to him. To be owned of him! To have written upon our souls the impress and signature of this high claim of love and right! Is not this the very height and grandeur of earthly life?

If the old clansman would shout his chieftain's name in battle, and whisper it even in death; if the soldier of our own day is fired to heroic deeds by the thought that he belongs to a certain regiment which has covered itself with glory on blood-red fields; if every worthy son and scion of a noble house *feels* himself to be ennobled in the very name he

bears, and strives to live so that *his* name may be reckoned in the long lineage of fame: shall not the sons of God -- ransomed with blood, and sealed with the Spirit -- walk worthy of their ownership and their high calling? Living, let us live unto the Lord; dying let us die unto the Lord; living and dying, let us be the Lord's.

II. VALUE. -- A seal is not put to a useless thing. The seal of a house, a corporation, a city, or a kingdom, is not seriously affixed to a thing which is unimportant and useless. The great seal of this country is for great uses.

So, God's great seal of grace indicates great reality and worth in those souls on which it is impressed. This worth is not merely the inherent worth of the soul itself. That, of course, is implied; that is the central and perpetual thing. A human spirit is essentially so great a thing, that the whole world would not be enough to give in exchange for it. But it is not the soul, simply *as* a soul that is sealed, in whatever state it may be, but a soul *with grace in it*. A soul containing holy principles and gracious affections -- *that* is the thing sealed. God thus bears witness to the great worth of his own work in the heart. He says, by the sealing of the Spirit, "This work of mine in human souls is so rare and precious, that I must not expose it to the tempests and chances of this sinful world without some indication of its worth. I must show *where* I have been especially working. I must tell what I have been doing. I must give at least

some glimpses of the costliness and beauty of that gracious work I am working here.” And so he puts his seal -- his great seal of the Spirit, telling to all who can understand, that the very richest and most valued part of all his earthly property is his own work of grace in and for living souls.

A soul in grace, and growing in that grace, has, as it were, the whole economy of redemption reproduced and living in itself. Such a soul is the latest fruit of God’s eternal thoughts and counsels. Beams of the eternal light are shining there, and thrillings of the everlasting love are there, and fulfilments in part of eternal purpose, and previsions of eternal joy. Christ is there in all the phases of his life, from the cave in Bethlehem to the cross on Calvary. That soul “knows him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;” has in itself the living germs of all his perfections, the moral fruits of his whole mediatorial work, the proofs of his continued intercession, and the foreshadowings of his everlasting glory.

Then is it not well to put a signifying seal on such things as these? And when the seal *is* thus put surely, my brethren, we ought to ponder much and prize very highly the rare and exceeding worth of what is thus sealed.

Compare this “kingdom of God within us” -- I shall not say with anything *material*, such a comparison were quite beside the mark, but -- with other things of the higher and

better kind, things mental and moral among men, you will find that it is peerless and alone. Shakespeare's noblest inspirations, in themselves, are not equal to a Christian's humblest thoughts when he is thinking in the Spirit. A philosopher's clearest distinctions, his most considered and fundamental principles, are not equal to a Christian's practical "discernings" of good and evil. A soldier's grandest efforts in planning or fighting a battle, are not to be compared with those lowlier victories won every day by the following of Jesus faithfully in the field of common life, and registered by the angels in "the heavenly places." And all the loves and links of home and social life, although they are very precious and dear, are yet far inferior to that love which lifts up the soul to an unseen Saviour, and makes an unseen place our real and eternal home.

Yes!

"This *is* the thing of greatest worth,  
The whole creation round;  
That which was lost in Paradise,  
That which in Christ is found."

A soul in grace is the noblest thing on earth. It is the one thing which God seals. He does not put his seal on man's strength, or on woman's beauty, or on soldier's courage, or on statesman's triumph, or on artist's skill; nor on any intellectual qualities; nor on any moral attainments: He puts



it on the soul that is living and striving in the faith and love of Christ.

Let us then value above all things else God's work of grace in us, and for us; and let us show that we value it by carrying it on. We are not to sit and gaze in satisfied complacency. We are to arise and work. We are co-workers with him -- working out our own salvation while he "works in us to will and to do of his good pleasure."

If a house half-finished -- of perfect proportions and beautiful in design, but still only half-finished -- were made over to you in gift, what would be the highest proof of appreciation and gratitude which you could return to the donor? Would it be to visit and look at the half built-walls every day? Would it be to watch the deepening weather-stains, the widening rents, the bowing walls? Would it not rather be this -- I will arise and build: I will carry out the design and finish the purpose, and bring forth the top-stone with shoutings; and my friend shall see that his gift is my delight."

In no other way can we tell God how truly and gratefully we appreciate the preciousness of his work in our souls, than by carrying on that work in his strength, until at last -- days of failure and imperfectness all gone by -- it shall shine out in the full splendor of celestial completeness in heaven.

III. DESTINATION. After all, a seal among men is but a temporary thing. It is not *intended* to endure forever. The letter reaches its destination; the will is read after death; the casket comes into new hands: in each case the seal is broken. Before the time for breaking it comes it is held sacred; *when* the time has come there is no more hesitation. The seal in this way always points to some future day, occasion, place, or time. It never means eternal secrecy. If there were anything which a man would wish *never* to be known, opened, or used, he would not seal, he would destroy it. In that case he would let the fire seal it with its consuming flame; or the sea in her unfathomed depths. A seal points always to a future day. So does the sealing of God by the Spirit. It points steadily on to "the day of redemption."

This is brought out strikingly by the phraseology of the text. The apostle does not say simply that he hath given us "the Spirit," but that "he that given us the *earnest* of the Spirit in our hearts." Whatever of his influence we have, is the pledge and assurance of still more to come. *That* again will be the promise of still more beyond -- and so on, in measures ever growing, until there shall come a day of full salvation. All this is expressly implied in the language used. This word "the earnest" would be quite misleading if such were not the idea. It is a mercantile term. It is properly that part of the purchase-money which is paid in advance,

as a security for the remainder. Now we know that our salvation is not a thing of bargain and sale. It is a free gift -- “without money and without price.” The gratuitous nature of salvation comes out in this very text. He hath “*given*” us the earnest of the Spirit. But it is given according to fixed principles. It is not an arbitrary and capricious thing -- given to-day, withdrawn to-morrow. “The gifts of God are without repentance.” He gives, and allows us to plead what we then have as the warrant and argument for expecting more. “He giveth more grace.” He gives, and then says, “To him *that hath* shall be given and he shall have more abundance.” He gives and says, “That is so much paid -- a small part of the blessedness and glory of a full redemption I am giving you now: it is little compared with the fulness and brightness of that which is to be revealed; but although little in itself, it is great in its relations and issues; it is a living germ which will blossom and fructify through the long summer of eternity.”

This is a subject apt to become trite because we have occasion to speak of it so often, our real knowledge of it is yet very little. We often speak of the great future. Living in a fading world, how can we *but* speak of the world which will never lose its bloom! Hasting ourselves, like very shadows, through a fleeting life, how can we but think and talk of that life of permanence and beauty to which we are going? And yet of exact knowledge how little we possess!

We take the help of all the analogies and prefigurations of this life. They do help us up to a certain point, and then we are left to imagination and to God. If we take, *e.g.*, “the earnest” of this world which we see issuing in full payments, we get *some* help in conceiving the relation between present grace and future glory, yet there is evidently a difference in the cases. The earthly symbols are too narrow and feeble to express very much of the grandeur of the heavenly life.

Take one flower in its blossom state on one of the days of mid winter, or one of the chill days of early spring -- the only flower you can find in all the woods, in all the gardens around -- that is truly nature’s “earnest.” And when in four or five months *all* the flowers are blooming and all the gardens are gay, that is nature’s willing, glorious payment, of what was promised in the earnest of the dark wintry day.

Or take the green blade -- the *only* one that can be seen in all the field above the red mould -- that is the earnest to the farmer of all the rich plenty of the harvest day. And when that day shall come -- when the corn is yellow, and the reapers are many, and the gleaners are satisfied, and the wains are loaded, and the garnerers are filling, and the stacks of the farm-yard are multiplying, and the beakers are brimming and song greets the glad morning, and sleep reigns through all the restful night -- that is the payment in full of the promise made in the one tender blade of the field.

The difference, no doubt, is very great in those cases, between the first and the last -- between the earnest and the payment. Ah, but the difference is far greater between the beginnings of grace and the fulnesses of glory. All the flowers on earth could not bloom into the meaning of that; nor all the corn-fields express, let them wave in what richness they might, the full ripeness of sanctified souls on the day of redemption!

Think of *the time* that God is taking for the full ripening of spiritual holy souls, before he proclaims their day of redemption come. 'Tis six thousand years since the first earnest was given, and there has been no full payment yet. We have had nothing *but* earnest during that time. No full flowering, no yellow ripeness, on this earthly field; nor has perfect harvest come yet in heaven. Sometimes on the bed of death, we see just a gleam or two of what seems the heavenly beauty. A soul in passing away from us casts back by reflection some of the first glories of the land of lights. But these things are soon over, and then we are left with the cold clay and silent death. That parting gleam was but another earnest, and no more.

Now what must the full payment be when God takes so long a time before making it! What "the glory that is to be revealed," when the revelation is kept back so long! Time is always an element with God in the production of greatness. Months, three or four, will raise a perfect flower out of the

bud which is the earnest. As many years will not do the same, it will take as many centuries, to the sapling of the oak or the cedar. Ah, but when they are made, how grand! When those slow centuries have come and gone, what trees of God they are!

Then what, again we say, must that work be in its perfection, the earnest of which was given in Eden, the fulness and glory of which no man has *yet* seen? No man has yet seen a man, as the man will be on God's day of redemption. God's men are walking here in disguise. You see their outward forms, but you know not what the substance of the manhood will be "when that which is perfect is come." They are guarding now the treasures of their spiritual life as they pass quickly through the perils of this night of time. But they are all hastening to one place -- to the place where the Saviour has promised to meet with them! to reveal them to themselves! to one another! to a wondering universe! They are all speeding on to one great day, "the day of redemption," for which they have, now, "the earnest in their hearts."

Little as that earnest may be in itself, how inestimably precious does it become when we view it as the promise of all that glory to come! Your peace is often ruffled, but it is the true beginning of the eternal rest. Your song is often low, and interrupted at times by groans and sighs, yet at length it will rise to the loud hosanna. Your love at times

seems to catch the chill of winter, and you *cannot* make it burn; but that same love *will* burn until it becomes vehement and pure enough to mingle with the loves of the seraphim. Your steps now are sometimes well-nigh slipping and your eye grows dim with darkness as you try to scan the future way; but you are going along the good old way where the myriads of God's saints have had their earnest, and at length you will come to the place, and that before long, where the full payments are made; where the "good measure is given, pressed down and running over" into each man's bosom; where "cities" are given as wages, and "crowns" as gifts. Where the kings are robed, where the conquerors have their triumphal entry, where the sons and daughters are at home!

"Quench not the Spirit." "Grieve not the holy Spirit of God by whom ye are sealed." "Live in the Spirit." "Walk in the Spirit." Flee from scenes of strife and sin. Listen to the still small voice. Yield to the gentle drawing. Cherish the pure thought. Breathe out the holy longing. Welcome the hour of prayer. "Enter into thy closet." Multiply thus "the earnest" and you will correspondingly enhance "the glory." Let God dwell in you now, and you will dwell with him for evermore. -- Alexander Raleigh, D.D.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE

### THE CHILD JESUS

VERY long since, -- between two and three thousand years ago -- there was built on the banks of the river Tiber, in Italy, a little city, to which was given the name of Rome. A brave and hardy tribe dwelt in it. They had very often quarrels with their neighbours, and generally conquered in the wars they waged. As they grew in numbers and strength, they extended their conquests, till at length they had fought and beaten down every power that would stand against them. They had gone into the far east, and had sent their arms westward, even into our own island. Indeed, the whole world then known might be said to be under their sway. Among other lands, that of the Jews had been subdued by them. At the time when that thing happened I am now going to tell, but here was still a king of that nation on the throne, but he was only there by the good-will of the Romans, and under the name of an ally, was, in truth, a subject of the great Roman emperor. The name of the king was Herod, and he was a very cruel, though bold and clever prince. He would stop at nothing, however bloody and base, if he thought it needful to help him to his own selfish ends. The Roman emperor's title was Caesar Augustus -- so



called to set his grandeur. One of the months of the year still bears his name.

While the power of Rome was growing up to the strength of a giant, God was making ready another power which was at last to break it in pieces. He told his prophets in Israel to say to the people, that in due time there would be born to them a King who would reign over all the earth. The people were very glad of this, and longed for the time; but most of them made great mistakes as to the kind of king God was to send them. For he was not a king who would spread his power by arms and war, but by truth and love. The prophets said that he would be born in Bethlehem, the city of David, and gave some marks by which the time, when it drew near, would be known. So, in the reign of Augustus Caesar, there was great hope and much talk about the coming of this king. And, indeed, God's hour for doing what he had promised had come.

So, one night as some shepherds were out in the fields, watching their flocks, and perhaps conversing about this very hope which so many people were fondly holding, they were suddenly alarmed by finding a very bright light shining round about them. It was as clear as if the sun had come back again to the highest sky; and there was something about the shining that was grander than the sun's. It was the glory of God himself. In the midst of the light there was seen the form of a bright angel, and you

cannot wonder that the shepherds were filled with fear. But soon they heard the angels voice, saying, Do not be afraid: I am come with great glad news to you -- news for all Israel and for all the world. For this day there has been born in the town of David, a Saviour -- God's anointed -- who shall be Lord of all. Go and see; and let this be the sign that my words are come to pass; you shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes, lying in a manger. So soon as the angel had said this, behold, there was a great throng of angels seen up in the air, and they began to sing a song in praise of God. The song they sung was this -- "Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace; goodwill to men." I suppose the kind words of the angel and the sweet song of his companions would soothe the fears of the shepherds; but, I think when the song ceased, and the glorious light went away, they would hardly be able to speak to each other for a time. At last, however, if they were dumb with wonder at first, they began to say, "Let us go and see this great thing which has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us." They did not doubt at all, that what had been told them by the angel would be found just as he stated. And so it was; for when they came to the place shown to them, they saw the babe lying in a manger, and his mother Mary, and her husband Joseph, beside him. You may be sure they looked with strange glad feelings at that child, and told Joseph and Mary what the angels had said about him. Next

day, too, and afterwards, they spoke to all they met about what they had seen and heard, and the people in the neighbourhood were filled with wonder. Some did not know what to make of it, but pious persons believed that God had sent a Deliverer to Israel, and they praised God for it.

But now I must tell you how Rome and her great emperor came to have to do with the birth of this promised king. I have said that he was born in Bethlehem; but his mother, Mary, and her husband did not live there. Mary staid in Nazareth, and it was there that an angel visited her, and told her that she should be the mother of a babe, whose name was to be called Jesus. How then did she come to be at Bethlehem when the child was born? In this way: Caesar Augustus wanted to have a grand census of his empire, that he might know how many subjects he had, and many more things about them, so he made a decree to have it done. It was to be done in Judea, as well as elsewhere, and in that country every one was to be enrolled in the city of the family he belonged to. Now Joseph and Mary belonged to Bethlehem, for they were descendants of David the king, and that was his town. They had to travel, therefore, from Nazareth south to that place; and when they reached it, there were so many people about it that they could get no room in the inn, and had to go to a stable for shelter. There the Lord was born. There the shepherds saw him, laid in

the crib. Shortly after, Mary and Joseph went to a house in Bethlehem, staid there for some months.

While they were staying there, a great stir happened in Jerusalem. Some wise men, called Magi, had come from the far east, and had been asking where the newborn King of the Jews was to be found. They said that one night in the sky they saw a star, which they knew shone to tell them that this king was born; and that they had left their own country, and come a long way that they might see him, and worship him. The news was carried to King Herod, and he was very frightened about it. He knew that there were prophecies telling that a great prince would come, and he feared that he would lose his throne. So he hatched a dark plot to get the child killed. That was his way; if anybody seemed to stand in his path, he would kill him. Therefore, he must have this child murdered. The plan he took was this: he sent for the scribes and learned men among the Jews, and bade them tell him where the Christ they looked for was to be born. They answered him that the prophet Micah had plainly said he would be born in Bethlehem. Herod next sent privately for the wise men, asked them at what time they had seen the star, pretended that he was very anxious to see this king himself, and to worship him, and asked them to go to Bethlehem, and when they had found the child, to come back to Jerusalem and bring him word. So the wise men went, not suspecting that the

wicked king, who all the while was lying and plotting to have the child's life. I am sure that the wise men, when they went to Bethlehem, would have taken any pains to find Jesus, but they did not need; for the star they had seen in the east appeared to them again, like an angel's lamp, and guided them to the house. They were very glad when they saw the star again, and went into the house over which it stood still, and saw the child they had come so far to hail as king. In the presence of Mary, his mother, they fell down and worshipped him, and opening their scribes, made him costly presents of gold and spices. Then they went back to their own country; but God having told them in a dream not to go back to Herod, they took a different road from that through Jerusalem. When Herod found this out, he was full of rage, and sent out some of his rough soldiers to Bethlehem to kill all the little children in the place, and round about it, under two years of age. He thought to make sure of killing Jesus among them; but God, who knew his bad heart, told Joseph to take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and stay there till he would be told to come back. So the cruel tyrant was baffled after all, though he filled Bethlehem with wailing. Yet do not be sorry for the little slaughtered babes -- they are with Jesus now.

And where is he? On his throne in heaven. The child born in Bethlehem is now Lord of all, and will, by and by,

come to judge the world. For long before he appeared this was written of him, “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.”

-----

### QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Can you name some other cities, that, like Rome, were the seats of great empires?
2. Do you know a prophecy about a new kingdom that was to destroy the iron power of Rome?
3. Can you find a text showing that pious people were looking for redemption at the time that Christ was born?
4. Can you name any shepherds in Old Testament times who had heavenly visions?
5. Do we read anywhere else in Scripture about the angels praising?
6. What other child, about the time that Jesus was born, had his birth and name foretold by an angel?
7. Find a prophecy of ancient Scripture, which the Romans conquering Judea showed about to be fulfilled.
8. Who, besides the shepherds and the Magi, did homage to Jesus when a babe?

9. What death did the King Herod die?
10. Find a text proving that Jesus will come to judge the world.

FOR answers to the foregoing, consult (Nahum i, Jer. li); Dan. ii., vii.; Luke ii. (Gen. xxxi.; Exod. iii.; 1 Sam. xvi); (Job xxxviii.; Rev. v.); Luke i.; Gen. xlix.; Luke ii.; Acts xii.; 1 Cor. v.

-----

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE LESSONS.

1. In what state was the world immediately before the flood?
2. What was the character of Noah? Gen. vi. 9.
3. In what respect will the second coming of Christ be to the world what the flood was? Mat. xxiv. 38, 39.
4. In what way is the world again to be changed? 2 Peter iii 7.
5. What effect should these prospects have on us? Mat. xxiv. 42; 2 Peter iii. 11; 1 Thess. v. 16.

-----

## EVENING WORSHIP.

GOD of Peace, defend and keep us in Thy fear and love.  
Give unto us the true knowledge of Thyself; the pardon of  
all our sins; health of body; the sanctification of our spirits;  
Thy peace while we live, and the salvation of our souls in  
the day of our Lord Jesus. *Amen.*

HYMN, or *Psalm lxi. 1-4.*

O LORD, I would delight in Thee,  
And on Thy care depend;  
To Thee in every trouble flee,  
My best, my only Friend.  
Oh! That I had a stronger faith,  
To look within the veil!  
To credit what my Saviour saith,  
Whose word can never fail!  
He that has made my heaven secure,  
Will here all good provide;  
While Christ is rich, can I be poor?  
What can I want beside?  
O Lord, I cast my care on Thee;  
I triumph and adore:  
Henceforth my great concern shall be



To love and please Thee more.

MATTHEW XXIV. 37-42

BUT as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. 38. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark. 39. And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. 40. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, the other left. 42. Watch therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

1 THESSALONIANS V. 1-9.

BUT of the times the season, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. 2. For yourselves know perfectly, that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. 3. For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. 4. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. 5. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness. 6. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. 7. For they that sleep, sleep in the night; and

they that be drunken, are drunken in the night. 8. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for an helmet the hope of salvation. 9. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.

## 2 Peter II. 1-14.

BUT there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that brought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. 2. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. 3. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not. See also veres 4-14.

---

### *Prayer.*

O GOD and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! We approach thee in His name, and by the new and living way which He hath opened and consecrated.

In thus naming the name of another we condemn ourselves. Holy Father, we confess our guilt; we desire to feel our shame; and to realize the ruin into which our nature has fallen. We would make our sinfulness our sorrow, even as it was deep and bitter sorrow to Him, “who, his own self, bare our sins in his own body on the tree.” We mourn because we have pierced Him. We have also grieved thy Spirit, and slighted thy fatherhood and love. There is no health or soundness in us. God be merciful unto us sinners. According to the multitude of thy loving-kindnessess, blot out our iniquities.

Blessed be thy name for the message of forgiveness, and for the glad tidings of a full salvation by Jesus Christ. “We have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of thy grace.” There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.” Deliver us, therefore, we pray thee, from the strokes of law, and from the torments of fear, and from the stings of conscience, and from the stains of guilt. Let thy salvation be full in us, and strong, and pure. May our faith in Jesus be very simple and entire, that our peace may be like a river, and our righteousness like the waves of the sea. May our repentance be unfeigned and without reserve; and may our acceptance of the gospel be without gainsaying. “Lord, we believe, help thou our unbelief.” Overcome all our doubts by more evident manifestations of

the truth; and all fears by the incomings of thy love. Out of distance, help us to “draw nigh,” and casting away from us the spirit of bondage and fear, may we henceforth obey the filial impulse and cry, “Abba, Father.”

Let thy good Spirit dwell in us evermore, according to our Saviour’s promise. May He take of the things that are Christ’s and show them unto us. May He lead us into all truth, and confirm us in all goodness, so that we shall live in the Spirit, and walk in the Spirit, and be spiritually minded, which is life and peace. So may we be set apart as living temples, to be filled with thy presence and praise. So may we be sanctified and kept from the evil. So may we be sealed unto the day of redemption. O Lord, we have as yet but *the earnest* of the Spirit in our hearts, and often, to ourselves, that earnest seems but small. Break not the bruised reed; quench not the smoking flax. Unto us who have, although what we have through our own fault, is so little, let there be given, that we may have more abundance. Perfect that which concerneth us, and so have us in thy holy keeping, that we may grow in grace as long as we live here, and then stand in the everlasting glory of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Let all who are dear to us be numbered among his true people, and led by the footsteps of the flock, until they come to the wide and safe pasture-land of heaven. Shepherd of Israel, shield and keep them and us through the perils and

storms of this earthly time, and grant us to meet all together in thy kingdom to praise thee for full redemption.

Take unto thee thy great power and reign. Subdue the people under thee. Extend thy kingdom. Reveal thy glory. Tell the glad tidings by Holy Scripture, by tongues of men, by ministry of angels, and by the gracious strivings of thy Holy Spirit, among all peoples and in every land, until all flesh shall see the salvation of God. And all we ask is in the name of Christ. *Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY

*Morning.*

**The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious,  
long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,**

Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin.

Thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness.

For thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds.

But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies.

For he does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men.

Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7   Neh. ix. 17.   Ps. lvii. 10.   Lam. iii. 32, 33.

*Evening.*

**And therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you.**

For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee.

In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.

For this is as the waters of Noah unto me:

For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.

Isa. xxx. 18.   Isa. liv. 7,8,9,10.

TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he a pleasant child? For since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore my bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord.**

Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear.

Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, all ye upon him while he is near:

Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

Jer. xxxi. 20.

Isa. lix. 1.

Isa. lv. 6, 7.

*Evening.*

**Have mercy upon me, O Lord; for I am weak: O Lord, heal me; for my bones are vexed.**

Return, O Lord, deliver my soul; Oh save me for thy mercies' sake.

Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies and thy loving-kindness; for they have been ever of old.

Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness' sake, O Lord.

Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name; and deliver us, and purge away our sins, for thy name's sake.

O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

Ps. vi. 2, 4.    Ps. xxv. 6, 7.    Ps. lxxix. 9.    Ps. xc. 14.

## WEDNESDAY

*Morning.*

**Cause me to hear thy loving-kindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust.**

Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.



Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Ps. cxliii. 8.      Ps. xxxii. 1, 2.      Isa. i. 18      Isa. liii. 6.

*Evening.*

**The Lord doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel.**

The Lord upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all those that be bowed down.

The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou giveth them their meat in due season.

Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.

The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.

He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.

Ps. cxlvii. 2.      Ps. cxlv. 14, 15, 16, 18, 19.

THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**Thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness.**

And now for a little space grace hath been shewed from the Lord our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage.

For we were bond-men; yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage.

Neh. ix. 17. Ezra ix. 8, 9.

*Evening.*

**For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.**

Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

And hope maketh not ashamed.

Tit. ii. 11.

Rom. v. 1, 2 3, 4, 5.

FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.**

But by the grace of God I am what I am; and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain.

Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel, according to the power of God;

Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

2 Pet. iii. 18.

1 Cor. xv. 10.

2 Tim. i. 8, 9.

*Evening.*

**Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.**

Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

And let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

Heb. xii. 28   Gal. vi. 7, 9, 10.

#### SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.**

Therefore, brethren, stand fast.

Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace,

Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.

Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:

For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

Heb. xii. 15      2 Thess ii. 15, 16, 17.      James i. 19, 20.

*Evening.*

**Take with you words, and turn to the Lord: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips.**

For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.

Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness; otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

Be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.

We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.

Hos. xiv. 2.    Rom. xi. 21, 22.    Rom. xii. 2.    2 Cor. vi. 1.

# Home Preacher, or Church in the House.

## FIFTH WEEK.

### MORNING WORSHIP.

O THOU Shepherd of Israel, who slumberest not nor sleepest; we thank Thee for our rest and sleep during the past night, and we desire to glorify Thee all this day; to walk by Thy laws; to be blessed by Thy providence; to be defended by thine Almighty hand, so that our lives may be holy and peaceable. O may Thy Spirit dwell in us as the spirit of holiness and peace, to be the guide of our way and the defender of our souls and bodies. *Amen.*

### HYMN, or *Psalm lxxx.17-19.*

Strive, when thou art call'd of God,  
When He draws thee by his grace,  
Strive to cast away the load  
That would clog thee in the race!

Fight, though it may cost thy life;  
Storm the kingdom, but prevail;

Let not Satan's fiercest strife  
Make thee, warrior, faint or quail.

Wrestle with strong prayers and cries,  
Think no time too much to spend,  
Though the night be pass'd in sighs,  
Though all day thy voice ascend.

Soldiers of the Cross, be strong,  
Watch and war 'mid fear and pain,  
Daily conquering woe and wrong,  
Til our King o'er earth shall reign.

### GENESIS, III. 13-15.

AND the Lord said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. 14. And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field: upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. 15. And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

## ISAIAH LIII. 1-6, 10-12.

WHO hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? 2. For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. 3. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from him: he was despised and we esteemed him not. 4. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. 5. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. 6. All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. 10. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, and he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. 11. He shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. 12. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong;



because he hath poured out his soul unto death; and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

## PSALM CXXX.

OUT of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord. 2. Lord, hear my voice; let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications. 3. If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? 4. But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared. 5. I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope. 6. My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning; I say, more than they that watch for the morning. 7. Let Israel hope in the Lord: for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption. 8. And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

### *Prayer.*

WE praise Thee, O Lord! Praise be to Thy holy name throughout the earth. Trusting to Thy mercy, compassion, and all-sufficient grace, we begin the week, with its duties its trials, temptations, joys and sorrows, and, it may be,

with its death to us, and our entrance into the world that is unseen. But, Father of mercies, our hope is in Thee; be ever near to us with thine almighty and gracious aid. We cannot trust thee too much, nor ourselves too little.

“Blessed,” indeed, are all they who put their trust in Thee:”

“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose soul is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee.” Grant unto us all that is necessary for soul and body, for time and for eternity. O Thou who knowest all our past lives, our manifold transgressions and inconsistencies; in the light of whose countenance are all our secret sins, who knowest the hard thoughts we have had of Thee, the hard speeches we have spoken against Thee, and what unprofitable servants we have been -- have mercy upon us. Pardon the sins of our tongue; our selfishness, pride, and vanity; our blindness of heart and unbelief; our impenitence and spiritual deadness. Pardon our sloth, in that we have done so little, and attempted so little. “Against Thee and Thee only have we sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight. Have mercy upon us according to Thy loving-kindness; according to the multitude of Thy tender mercies, blot out all our transgressions.” Pardon us for the sake of Jesus Christ Thy Son, who died for the chief of sinners.

If it please Thee, O Lord, continue long to us in Thy mercy the precious gifts -- our beloved friends. If it please Thee, give us and them such things as are necessary for the

support of our earthly life in comfort, and without suffering to mind or body. If it please Thee, deliver us from sickness and poverty, from plague, from war or sudden death. If it please Thee, preserve to us our reason, and take not away but increase our talents, enabling us to improve them for our own good and for Thy glory. O Thou who willest not the death of a sinner, but rather that he would return from the wickedness which he hath committed and live, deliver from sin, and preserve in the ways of righteousness ourselves and all who we know and love; and grant that this year we may all increase in the knowledge and love of Thyself, and be taught by Thy Spirit “to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, and righteously, and godly in this present evil world, looking for the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity, and to purify us to Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” What we know not, yet ought to know, regarding Thee or ourselves -- our sins, our duties, our temptations, and Thy revealed truth -- do Thou, Lord, teach us! So long as Thou art pleased to continue us in being, may we bring forth much fruit, and abound in the work of the Lord. If it is Thy will that we should die, grant that we may so live as to be received by Thee among Thy faithful servants. “Our Father,” &c.

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

OUR Father! Inasmuch as it is eternal life to know Thee as the only living and true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent, we beseech of Thee to glorify Thy Son to us and in us by Thy Spirit, that so we may glorify Thee and enjoy Thee for ever. Vouchsafe of Thine infinite mercy thus to enlighten our heart and mind to love Thyself and Thy most holy and perfect will, to the honour and glory of Thy name.  
*Amen.*

### HYMN, or *Psalm lxxii.* 5-8.

WHEN gathering clouds around I view,  
And days are dark and friends are few,  
On Him I lean, who not in vain  
Experienced every human pain;  
He sees my wants, allays my fears,  
And counts and treasures up my tears.

If aught should tempt my soul to stray  
From heavenly wisdom's narrow way,  
To fly the good I would pursue,  
Or do the sin I would not do;  
Still He, who felt temptation's power,  
Shall guard me in that dangerous hour.

If wounded love my bosom swell  
Deceived by those I prized too well;  
He shall His pitying aid bestow,  
Who felt on earth severer woe --  
At once betrayed, denied, or fled  
By those who shared His daily bread.

If vexing thoughts within me rise,  
And, sore dismayed, my spirit dies;  
Still He, who once vouchsafed to bear  
The burden of our guilt and care,  
Shall sweetly soothe, shall gently dry,  
The throbbing heart, the streaming eye.

And O! When I have safely past  
Through every conflict but the last;  
Still unchanging , watch beside  
My painful bed, for Thou has died!  
Then point to realms of cloudless day,  
And wipe the latest tear away!

-----

1 THESSALONIANS, V. 1-11, 14-28.

**BUT** of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. 2. For yourselves know perfectly, that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. 3. For when they say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. 4. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. 5. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. 6. Therefore, let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. 7. For they that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that be drunken, are drunken in the night. 8. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for an helmet the hope of salvation. 9. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, 10. who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. 11. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do. 14. Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. 15. See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but

ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all me. 16. Rejoice evermore. 17. Pray without ceasing. 18. In every thing give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. 19. Quench not the Spirit. 20. Despise not prophesyings. 21. Prove all things: hold fast that which is good. 22. Abstain from all appearance of evil. 23. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it. 25. Brethren, pray for us. 26. Greet all the brethren with an holy kiss. 27. I charge you by the Lord, that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren. 28. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. *Amen.*

## SERMON V.

“SLEEP ON NOW, AND TAKE YOUR REST.” -- Mark xiv. 41.

“THOU KNEWEST NOT THE TIME OF THY VISITATION.”

-- Luke xix. 44.

THE importance of time to us cannot be measured by its length. Some hours may be more full of history than years, and a few minutes may mark the turning point of our life, and give birth to tiny springs of thought or action which shall swell into ever-increasing and never-ending streams of good or evil, joy or sorrow. The value of time is rather to be

estimated by the means which it affords of our receiving or doing good, and thereby fulfilling the very end for which we exist -- that of glorifying God, and enjoying him now and for ever; and the relative value of time depends upon the opportunities which it brings of our realizing this high and holy calling.

Accordingly, in the lives of us all, there occur periods of peculiar importance to ourselves, when God seems to draw very near, calling us to some special work -- precious hours, times of "visitation" -- when, without seeking it, our hearts or hands *find* something given us to accept or to reject, to perform or to resist, and when the spirit in which we live and act at that particular moment must necessarily affect our future history. What makes this thought the more solemn is the fact, that such periods may be very brief. For just as the fate of empires has been fixed for all time by a single battle fought on a small spot of earth and during a few fleeting hours, even so may the hours be as few and fleeting during which a like battle between good and evil may be fought in the solitude of our own hearts, the result of which may fix our destiny by determining our character. The opportunity afforded to us, in God's providence, of doing special service may thus pass so rapidly away, that it must be taken advantage of promptly, without any hesitation or delay, or be lost for ever. The work which our hand findeth to do may be of such a nature as necessitates



the doing of it “with all our might”, if it is to be done at all; for it often happens, without our knowing or suspecting it, that the only hour for labour assigned to us by the Master is not always one at early morn, which, though lost through sloth, may nevertheless be partially redeemed by increased diligence during the remaining period of the day, but is frequently as an eleventh hour at evening, when the shadows are falling fast around us of a night in which no man can work.

Another feature only I will notice, as one which characterizes those solemn times of visitation -- and that is, the absence of any outward sign to arrest the senses, to attract our attention, or to symbolize by anything striking or impressive the importance of what is taking place in the inner and unseen world of our own spirits. The loud noises and paralysing terrors of the earthquake and the storm play but a small part in nature, when compared with the silent but irresistible forces of the showers of spring, the warm sunbeam, the gentle breeze, and the morning or evening dew. Nor are great changes which affect human history, or events which mark points of transition from an old order of things to a new, always or often accompanied by what strikes the eye or excites the fancy. The transference, for example, of the vast empire of India, with its teeming millions, to the government of the Queen, was effected by a decision of the Legislature expressed in a few minutes, and

was made known by a proclamation read in as brief a period of time; yet who can comprehend the momentous consequences of this transaction! Again, a wire is dragged from the margin of the ocean, and connected in a few seconds with another in a small tent, by a few men whose presence or whose operations do not interest the peasant labouring in the neighbouring field. How quiet and calm is the whole process! Nevertheless, that wire connects continents, becomes the highway for words and thoughts between nations, annihilates space and time, and revolutionizes the world. And so it happens in spiritual things. God often speaks to the soul in the still small voice when He is not in the earthquake or the storm. “The kingdom of God” which is within us “cometh not with observation,” nor with observation does it depart. In the inmost recess of our own hearts, which no eye can see but God and ourselves -- in the quiet of our own rooms -- amidst the stillness of the house of God -- in a whisper with a fellow-being -- in the deep calmness of the sick-chamber, with nothing outward, perhaps, to startle or alarm -- may the hour come in which the history of years is to be determined; the hour when the step we take to the right or left will give a direction to our future journey; the hour which, according as we awake to the light of life, or sleep on in the darkness of spiritual death, shall usher in an endless day, or begin an endless night!

These thoughts find a fitting illustration in the affecting history from which the words of one of our texts are taken. When our Lord came on that memorable night -- His last on earth -- to the garden of Gethsemane, He said to His disciples, "Sit ye here, while I shall pray." He then took Peter, James, and John with Him, and, going further into the solitude of the garden, "began to be sore amazed and very heavy; and He said unto them, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, unto death." Then, as if seeking deeper seclusion, "He went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him." It was in these circumstances that He again said to His three chosen friends, "Tarry ye here, and watch." And wherefore? Whatever other reasons there might have been for His making this request, oh! surely we are not wrong in thinking that one at least was His desire as a man, with a heart more truly human in all its feelings and emotions than ever beat, who had himself wept with friends in sorrow, to have near him at such a time those who could feel with him and by their presence and sympathy help him to bear the terrible and mysterious burden of woe. Remember only what that night was to be to Him! -- how He was never to sleep again until He slept in the grave, and never see a friendly eye till, from the cross, He saw His mother; how the cup was to be drunk which was filled with the bitterest draught which the Saviour

could drink -- the malice, hatred, falsehood, treachery, ingratitude, cruelty, blasphemy, against Himself and His Father, of men, His own brothers, whom He loved as He alone could love! -- and how in a few hours, this, the most frightful scene of wickedness ever witnessed by men or angels on earth, was to be ushered in by the treacherous kiss of one of His disciples, and by the desertion of them all. His cup was full. As He was about to receive it, His hand trembled; His sweat like drops of blood fell to the ground; "being in agony He prayed the more earnestly." The scene of suffering in that lonely garden under the shadow of Olivet moved the hearts of the holy angels, one of whom came to His help, and ministered to Him. Yet the man Christ Jesus clung to His brethren. He craved *their* love as He had never done before; and wished them, of all others, to carry His burden of sorrow. But, alas! when in the midst of this long agony He sought their aid, He found them asleep; all was silent, and He was alone with His great woe. "What!" He exclaims, "could ye not watch *with me* one hour? Here, therefore, was a work given them to do, a glorious and blessed work of such sympathy with their Divine Master; and at such a time, and on such a night! There was need, besides, for their own sakes that they should be watchful. Perils they knew not of surrounded them. Warnings had already He given, especially to Peter, to quicken them. And so the loving Lord, who was ever

thinking of others more than of Himself, said, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit is willing;" but that was not enough, for "the flesh is weak." And then, with gentle but significant admonition, He said, "Simon, sleepest *thou*?" Here, indeed, was a crisis of life! -- an hour of momentous importance to those disciples. But they knew not the time of their visitation. When heaven was all alive to the importance, yet they who were so nearly concerned in its duties and trials allowed it to pass away in slumber. No doubt they had often spent nights beneath the canopy of heaven with the Saviour, and probably many in this very garden; for "Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with His disciples." They had frequently seen Him engaged in prayer, while the world was asleep. Other nights like this could be remembered, which had been followed by peaceful days. May not all things continue as they have been for years? All seems peaceful on earth and in heaven! The stars shine with their old untroubled lustre in the silent sky. Not a breath of air moves the olive leaves that hang from the trees, and glisten in the moonlight. Why then be awake and watchful? But at last, convinced that there is something unusual in this night -- aroused and ashamed of their sloth by the Saviour three times coming to them -- arrested by what they see about Him and hear from His lips, such as they never had seen or heard before -- they at last become wakeful and watchful. They are resolved to

sleep no more. Whatever has to be done, they are ready to do it now. Alas! Alas! it is too late!

The precious opportunity is lost and gone, never more to return! Yes, they could have shared and alleviated by their sympathy the sorrows of Jesus, and done a work of love, which would have been a sweet memory during life and after it, and enjoyed a privilege which angels coveted. But the time is past. It is vain to waken now -- "Sleep on *now*, and take your rest. It is enough -- the hour is come!" Oh! Bitter and painful thought in after years, what they *could* have done and ought to have done on that memorable night, if they had only forgot themselves, and thought of Him who "loved His own, and loved them to the end!" -- if they had only known this as the day of their visitation! But it was now lost, never to be recalled. The Saviour forgave their denial of the sympathy which He asked, and would have valued; but did they ever forgive themselves?

Now, the principle expressed in what we have already said might be applied to many instances which frequently occur in our own history, when God is specially calling us to awake, and when, if we refuse His call, this judgment may be passed upon us -- "Sleep on now, and take your rest."

The time when saving truth is revealed to the conscience is one of these, and the only one I shall at present notice. It is by the truth as it is in Jesus that we are "born again," "set free," and sanctified through the

Spirit. And God has many ways of revealing it to us, and of bringing it into contact with our spirit. It may shine on our souls from “words that burn,” as we read them in the Holy Scriptures, or hear them from the lips of a Christian friend, with earnest voice, and speaking eye, or last breath, and with the best of all comments on them -- the living epistle of a holy life, written with the finger of God. Or the truth may be read in the page inscribed by the living, or by those who, though dead, thus speak; or, as it most frequently happens, it may come each Lord’s day from the lips of a true preacher, which is himself possessed by it. But by whatever outward instrumentalities it travels from heaven to earth, truth is always a very solemn messenger from God to the responsible spirit of man, calling him to awake and walk in the light of life; and it is a memorable era in his history when face to face with it he must entertain it as a friend, reject it as an enemy, or delay meeting it seriously, til a more convenient season. Now most men shrink from untruthfulness in expressing their convictions, and many boast of their honesty in uttering their beliefs, whatever these may be. But let it be remembered that hypocrisy is but one form of untruthfulness. For while the outer man may be true in his words to the convictions of the inner man, the inner man may be untrue in his thoughts *to the truth itself*. And in this lies the real test of truthfulness -- the sincerity with which we desire to be found *by* the truth,

or turn our minds, like mirrors, to receive its beams. Now, there are times in every man's history, when truth has thus come to him with a power and a clearness which carried its own evidence to his soul; when it seemed to search him to his inmost heart, and to isolate him from all others -- as if it said, "I am come from Him who is the Truth to thee, to teach thee, to warn thee, to invite thee, to lead and guide thee, to bring thee out of thyself and unto thy God and Saviour; *thou art the man* to whom I am sent; awake now from thy sleep, and Christ will give thee light; believe and live!" Then comes the awful question on which his character and happiness for eternity may depend: yea or nay, will he, the responsible man, yield himself to the truth or rebel against it? He is perhaps, conscious of a struggle between the kingly voice of truth, in the person of the crucified and living Saviour, on the one hand; and of pride and passion, self-interest, vanity, sloth, or the fear of man, on the other. And perhaps, also, as the least painful alternative, he seeks to effect a compromise by delay. A yes or no, one manly resolution, might end the battle and establish peace for ever. But the charms of sleep are yielded to -- the hope is possibly entertained that at some future time truth will be received and obeyed, but not now. "*Today*" he has made up his mind not to "hear His voice," but to "harden his heart." A solemn crisis, verily, is this of choosing light or darkness! Yet there is nothing in the house of God, nothing in the silent room,



nothing perhaps, in the conscience, to indicate its importance. For this very delay may be the prelude to darkness and death. Truth accordingly soon begins to lose its effect -- impressions become every day less vivid -- convictions less sharp -- resolutions more feeble and evanescent. There is no faith, no repentance, no change of heart towards God. The Spirit is grieved and resisted, until at last there is heard only the murmur, "a little more sleep, a little more slumber, a little more folding of the hands." Alas! it shall be so. And if so, truth may then sound as before from book or living voice, but it has lost its power; and its reality is gone; for the fatal habit becomes formed of steeling the heart against its finer influences. It neither alarms, nor persuades, nor moves the soul as it once did. Its voice, once loud, becomes as a distant and indistinct echo to the deafening ear -- the living stream becomes like the chill waters in a dark cavern that as they fall on the heart add chill to chill, stone to stone. For God hath said, My Spirit will not always strive with man." The righteous sentence goes forth, "Sleep on now, and take your rest!" You would not be alarmed by the truth -- it will disturb you no more! "Because I called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; ye would none of my counsel, and despised all my reproof; *therefore* shall ye eat of the fruit of your *own* way, and be filled with your *own* devices." What an impressive example have we in the

history of Paul's brief interview with Agrippa and Felix, of the fact that there is often given to men "accepted times" when God is to be heard, and "days of salvation" when He will succour, but which may pass away in even a few hours! The apostle met these persons for the first time face to face, revealed to them saving truth -- pled with them -- "reasoned with them of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come." Life and death, light and darkness were there, and the choice of either was demanded of them. And Agrippa was almost persuaded to become a Christian, but never became one; Felix trembled, and resolved to send for Paul at a more convenient season, but never did so. Both refused to awake *then* to the light of truth, and no other opportunity was afforded. The crisis passed. Paul departed. The sentence was pronounced, "Sleep on now, and take your rest," and so they awoke no more. Like ships that meet in moonlight upon the ocean, exchange a few words, separate, and are soon lost to each other in the darkness, as they pursue their respective voyages, so did the tide of life bring those human beings together: words and thoughts of infinite moment passed between spirit and spirit; then they separated -- the prisoner to his cell with Jesus, the king and governor to the world without Him, and they never met again! Contrast this in your own minds with the prompt acceptance of the truth, and the glorious consequences of so doing, in the case of Paul himself, who

was “not *disobedient* to the heavenly vision” -- and of the thief on the cross -- of the Ethiopian eunuch -- of the jailor at Philippi -- of the thousands on the day of Pentecost. These awoke as the first beams of early morn touched their eyelids, and now they sleep no more.

Oh, I beseech you by the value of your immortal souls, and your sense of responsibility, by the love of God in revealing truth, and His righteous judgment upon all who reject it, that ye “receive not the grace of God in vain,” but give *earnest* heed to the things you have heard -- “to take heed *how* ye hear” -- to awake at once to its call, lest the sentence should be pronounced upon your unthankfulness, delay, or unbelief, “Sleep on now, and take your rest!” Let this be your resolution, from which nothing shall tempt you to deviate -- to receive the truth in the love of it, and be at peace with God and your own conscience. --EDITOR.

-----

## THE CHILDREN’S SERVICE.

### THE FIRST TWO BROTHERS.

I DO not know what sort of house Adam and Eve lived in, after they were driven out from the garden of Eden. It was

probably at first only a booth, or tent: but perhaps God, who graciously clothed them, taught them also how to build a stronger dwelling. I have said, however, I do not know about that; but one thing I do know, whatever kind of home they had in outward respects, it was like other human homes since, for joys and sorrows. There was laughter in it, and there were tears: there were hopes, and fears, and changes, and deaths. When Adam and Eve went to it, they carried a bright hope in their hearts. They looked for a son who would be a great Deliverer, and crush the serpent that had led them into sin. So when in that first home of fallen man a little boy was born, his mother eagerly called him Cain -- a "possession, a thing gotten" -- almost as if we were to say, Gain. She thought this was the seed the Lord had promised. Alas! She was to be bitterly disappointed by and by. Another little boy was given her, but she did not seem to hope much from him, for she called him Abel -- "vanity" -- here, also, knowing what was coming. It is of these two boys, and what came of them, that I am about to tell you.

They grew up, no doubt, much as boys do still, playing with each other a great deal, sometimes gladdening their mother's heart, and sometimes vexing her. They would soon begin, too, in all likelihood to show the dispositions that came out in after years, and make their parents muse and pray. They did not go to school, for there was none to

go to, except the great school where the sun and stars and winds and trees and flowers are teachers. Except also the home-school. No doubt they had lessons there: and two things I think they were often told about; how their father and mother once lived in the fair garden, but did what God had told them not to do and were driven forth from it; and how, at the same time, God had given them hope of being forgiven and saved and brought into a fairer and better place by a great Deliverer. I think our first great-grandfather would sometimes take his boys by the hand, and walk with them up towards the gate where the cherubim were keeping watch, and the sword of flame was turning, and tell them the meaning of what they saw -- how it said to them, Do not come this way to seek a road to the tree of life, but trust and wait for another, safe and free. Then would Adam teach them, that to show faith in the promise of the great Helper who was to come and conquer Satan, though not without suffering himself, they were to offer sacrifices from time to time, and the boys would often stand by while the lamb was slain and burnt, and the smoke went up to heaven.

At length the boys grew up to youth, and began to act for themselves, choosing their occupations, and going on with them. Then they became men, and perhaps had houses of their own. Cain had chosen to be a farmer: he tilled the ground, and sowed, and reaped. Abel had preferred being a

shepherd, and had flocks which he took care of. Both were very pleasant employments: there was hard work in both, but that does not hurt one when he is healthy and strong; and the two might have been very happy brothers together. So they would have been, if they had thought alike on the greatest subjects. But they did not. Cain did not feel himself to be a sinner, and did not care for the hope of a Saviour, to bring forgiveness, and open the way to a higher life. He did not believe about sacrifices, and what they meant. He was content with his farming and his crops, and looked for nothing better than richer and wider fields. Abel felt himself a fallen creature; he wanted to get back to the lost tree of life: he believed the promise of God that his father and mother had told him about, and he was willing to offer sacrifice, because God had bidden them to do this in the faith and hope of a Saviour to come. This difference in the character of the two brothers came out strongly one day, and led to sad results.

They had gone together to worship. The time was probably the Sabbath-day, the seventh or last of the week: the place was perhaps near the gate where the sword-like flame shone and turned. Both went with offerings, and presented them before God. Cain's was a pile of fruits of the ground -- grain and produce of the fields -- and it seemed to say, God, I thank thee for my life and food, but nothing more. Abel's was taken from the flocks, and was

according to God's command. It seemed to say, Lord, I believe in thy promise of One who is to redeem us by suffering; I know myself a sinner, and want to be saved by him; I thank thee for the hope of salvation. So when they had each presented his offering, behold, God showed he was pleased with the one, and not with the other. His answer was probably by fire, as in other cases. Perhaps a stream of flame from that shining sword came forth and burnt up Abel's offering, and left Cain's heap lying on the ground. In some way, at least, God's acceptance of the one and his refusal of the other were clearly shown. Cain was very angry: his wrath was seen in his face: and although God spoke to him, and reasoned with him, as a father does with a child, he would not listen, but went away with hate to his brother in his heart.

Not long after this, the two brothers were in the fields together, talking with each other; when suddenly Cain struck Abel a cruel blow, and did not leave off smiting him till he died. He thought, I suppose, that being by themselves in the fields no one could see him do the wicked deed. But an eye from heaven was watching him all the time; God took notice, and came to the murderer, and told him that his brother's blood was crying to him from the ground, and sent him away from that place, with a heavy curse on him, to be a wanderer in the earth. But what do you think would Eve and Adam think now of their first born

son? And what would be their anguish when they found Abel slain in the fields? Yet, I am sure, they grieved less afterwards for the murdered than for the murderer: and with good reason, for Abel had gone to God, and Cain had gone away from him.

Dear children, that is a sad story to have happened in the first family on earth. It is full of lessons, solemn and warning. It teaches us the mystery that is in every baby's little form; who can tell "what manner of child this shall be?" It shows how soon the fall bore bitter, bitter fruits. It warns against angry passions, and hatred of others, which is already murder. It tells us how we are safe only when we own ourselves to be sinners and seek salvation in God's way. That way is now very plainly taught to us. We see what Abel could not see, and his faith with little light rebukes us if we do not believe with much light. The way of salvation is Jesus, who gave himself an offering for us. Every one who comes to God pleading Christ's name, will be delivered from death and hate, and will be made to live and love for ever.

-----

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.



1. What mother was it that gave her new-born boy a name which his father would not let him keep?
2. Can you find any proof in the third chapter of Genesis that Adam believed God's promise about the woman's seed?
3. Do you know any passages of Scripture which represent the works of God as teachers?
4. Is the garden of Eden called paradise in Scripture? What else is so called?
5. Where is the tree of life said to be growing now?
6. Can you find anything in the third chapter of Genesis to suggest that God appointed sacrifices?
7. Can you name any other great Scripture characters that were shepherds like Abel?
8. Where is Abel named as the first of a roll of "elders" that have obtained renown?
9. What two very different voices are spoken of as coming from Abel after his death?
10. What voice is said to speak better things than one of these?
11. Can you name another first martyr, that, like Abel, died in the fields?
12. Can you name another brother-murderer besides Cain?
13. What sons of a good man were murderers of their brother in their hearts, though they did not shed his blood?

14. What two persons in the New Testament are somewhat like Cain and Abel offering sacrifice, for the contrast they present?

15. Can you name another murderer reprieved by God from death, like Cain?

SEARCH for answers: --Gen. xxxv.; iii.20; Ps. xix. and Rom. i.; 2 Cor. xii; Rev. ii. xii.; Gen iii. 21; Exod. iii. And 1 Sam. xvi.; Heb. xi.; Gen. iv. And Heb. xi.; Acts vii.; 2 Sam. xiii; Gen. xxxvii.; Luke xviii.; 2 Sam. xii.

-----

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE LESSONS.

1. What was the first promise ever made of a suffering yet conquering Redeemer?

2. Mention some things regarding Christ prophesied by Isaiah? Isa. liii. 3, 5, 7, 9, 11.

3. Can a sinner be saved by his deeds? Rom. iii. 20.

4. How is a sinner saved? Rom. iii. 24-26.

5. Why did God send his Son into the world? Gal. iv. 4, 5.

-----

## *Prayer.*

O GOD, we mourn over the fall of our first parents by their sinning against Thee. We lament the sin and woe which their guilt has brought into the world. We mourn that men should so hate and war with each other, and so forget and refuse Thee. O God of love, who hast sent Jesus to save the fallen and lost, to ask us to go back to Thee by him, and to learn of him to be lowly and loving; by thy Holy Spirit put away from our hearts all hateful, envious, grudging feelings, and teach us to love. Teach us to love brothers and sisters, companions, neighbours, schoolmates. Teach us to love all. Teach us thy love, for Jesus' sake. *Amen.*

-----

## EVENING WORSHIP.

MOST merciful God! blot out all our sins -- all our backslidings and manifold injuries done by us to our own souls, and to Thy holy work on earth. Knit our wills to Thy most wise, holy and loving will, that we may be most heartily content with whatsoever Thou art pleased to do with us in the world. Help us so to trust Thee, that we may

peacefully suffer the greatest pains, if by these we are brought to a truer knowledge of Thyself. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm xxxvii.* 3-7.

How gentle God's commands,  
How kind His precepts are!  
Come, cast your burdens on the Lord,  
And trust His constant care.

While Providence supports,  
Let saints securely dwell;  
That Hand, which bears all Nature up,  
Shall guide His children well.

Why should this anxious load  
Press down your weary mind?  
Haste to your heavenly Father's throne,  
And sweet refreshment find.

His goodness stands approved  
Down to the present day:  
I'll drop my burden at His feet,  
And bear a song away.

### ROMANS III. 20-26.

THEREFORE by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. 21. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22. Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference. 23. For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God: 24. Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; 25. Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; 26. To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness; that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

### GALATIANS IV. 4-7.

BUT when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5. To redeem them that were under the law, that we might

receive the adoption of sons. 6. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

*Prayer.*

We thank Thee, most loving Father, through Jesus Christ Thy Son, that Thou hast this day defended us from all danger, and bestowed on our souls and bodies so many mercies. How much unhappiness we might this day have experienced! How much misery and anxiety! But Thou hast kept us in Thy peace, and the day is ended in Thy presence. “O Lord, what is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visitest him?” yet Thou are mindful of us, and Thou visited us every moment of our lives with Thy loving-kindness and Thy tender mercy.

We cannot answer to Thee for one of a thousand of our transgressions; therefore we come to Thee confessing our sins, which are very many and very great, and asking from Thee their forgiveness for Christ’s sake. We fly for refuge to Thy mercy through thy Son, glorying in His cross and in His propitiation for the sins of the world.

Holy Father! We thank Thee for calling us to be holy like Thyself, and to be made conformable to the image of

Thy Son in all things. O grant that as He died for our sins, and rose again, so we too may die to our sins, and crucify the flesh, burying the old man with his affections and lusts, and rising daily with our living Head to newness of life. May Christ be in us the hope of glory. May His Spirit dwell continually in us as a spirit of adoption, shedding abroad Thy love upon our hearts, and enabling us to love Thee as our Father, all men as our brethren, and specially those who are born again of Thy Spirit. Inspire us more and more with the true spirit of self-sacrifice; so that losing our false life in the flesh, we may gain true life in the Spirit. May we take up our cross daily and follow Jesus, and every day more and more be possessed by “that love which suffereth long and is kind, which envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; which rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; which beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things, and which never faileth.” Have mercy, O Lord, upon those who suffer in body or mind; those who are entering upon a night of pain or sorrow; those who are watching beside the sick and dying, or mourning over the dead! Have mercy upon the poor, upon the widow and orphan, on the oppressed of all lands; and grant that amidst all their trials they may be enabled to hold fast their confidence in Thee, which will never put them to shame. As

opportunities are given to us in Thy providence of doing them good, may we cheerfully avail ourselves of them. Comfort their souls by blessing them with a hearty repentance for all sins, a patient waiting upon Thyself in every trying dispensation, and a meek submission to Thy will as being at all times and in all circumstances perfect wisdom and perfect love. “Our Father, which art in heaven.” &c.

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

MONDAY.

*Morning.*

**There is no God else besides me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none besides me.**

Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else.

For the Lord shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.



Hearken unto me, my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation; for a law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people.

Isa. xlv. 21, 22.

Isa. li. 3, 4.

*Evening.*

**The same was in the beginning with God.**

All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.

In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

To make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:

To the intent that now, unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God.

John i. 2, 3, 4 5.

Eph. iii. 9, 10.

TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth.**

My mercy will I keep for him forever more, and my covenant shall stand fast with him.

His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven.

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.

In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called, **THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.**

The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

Ps. lxxxix. 27, 28, 29.

Jer. xxiii. 5, 6.

Gen. xlix. 10.

*Evening.*

**And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.**

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end.

And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots;

And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.

Gen. iii. 15.

Isa. ix. 6, 7.

Isa. xi. 1, 2

WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**In that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.**

Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees.

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.

Isa. xi. 10.

Isa. xxxv. 3,5, 6.

*Evening.*

**And the Desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts.**

Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and

to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

Hag. ii. 7.

Dan. ix. 24, 25.

THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.**

He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street.

A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench; he shall bring forth judgment unto truth.

I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles.

Isa. xlii. 1, 2, 3, 6.

*Evening.*

**Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.**

The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart,: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Isa. xl. 1, 3.

Isa. xl. 11.

Matt. xi. 28, 29, 30.

FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.**

For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.

And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun: when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.

Isa. lx. 1, 2, 3.

Isa. lix. 19.

*Evening.*

**And all flesh shall know that I the Lord am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the might One of Jacob.**

Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles and shalt suck the breast of kings: and thou shalt know that I the Lord am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob.

And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord.

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

Isa. xlix. 26.    Isa. lx. 16.    Isa. lix. 20.    Isa. liii. 4.

SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**They weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver.**

And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prized at of them.

Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.

He was wounded for our transgressions he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him and with his stripes we are healed.

He was oppressed and he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

Zech. xi. 12, 13.

Zech. xiii. 7.

Isa. liii. 5, 7.

*Evening.*

**For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.**

They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.

I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair.

They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.

Ps. xxii. 17, 18.

Isa. l. 6.

Zech. xii. 10.

# HOME PREACHER, OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE

SIXTH WEEK

## MORNING WORSHIP

OUR God and Father, who in Thine infinite mercy hast given us Thy Son as a propitiation for our sins, and Thy Spirit to deliver us from evil, to preserve us in holiness, and to keep us in perfect peace; grant that we may abide in Jesus through a constant in faith of Him, so as to walk worthy of Thee, who hast called us to Thy kingdom and glory! *Amen.*

HYMN, or *Psalm xlv. 2-6.*

GO, worship at Immanuel's feet;  
See, in His face what wonders meet;  
Earth is too narrow to express  
His worth, His glory, or His grace!



The whole creation can afford  
But some faint shadows of my Lord;  
Nature, to make His beauties known,  
Must mingle colours not her own.

Oh! Let me climb those higher skies  
Where storms and darkness never rise!  
There He displays His powers abroad,  
And shines and reigns, th' incarnate God.

Nor earth, nor seas, nor sun nor stars,  
Nor heaven His full resemblance bears:  
His beauties we can never trace,  
Till we behold Him face to face.

## GENESIS XII. 1-9

NOW the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father' house, a land that I will shew thee: 2. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: 3. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. 4. So Abram

departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. 5. And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came. 6. And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land. 7. And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him. 8. And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Beth-el, and pitched his tent, having Beth-el on the west, and Hai on the east; and there he builded an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him. 9. And Abram journeyed, going on still towards the south.

### GENESIS XIII. 2-4, 18.

AND Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold. 3. And he went on his journeys from the south even to Beth-el, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Beth-el and Hai; 4. Unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there

Abram called on the name of the Lord. 18. Then Abram removed his tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron, and built an altar unto the Lord.

### GENESIS XV. 13-16.

AND he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years: 14. And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge; and afterward shall they come out with great substance. 15. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. 16. But in the fourth generation shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.

### *Prayer.*

WE worship Thee, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the only living and true God! Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is done in heaven. We acknowledge Thee as the giver of all our mercies, temporal and spiritual, and desire to see habitually Thy love in them all, so that our temporal mercies may lead us to

Thyself. We thank Thee for our creation in Thine own image; for the gift of Jesus Christ to redeem us from all iniquity, and to bring many sons and daughters unto Thee. We thank Thee for the manifold sources of enjoyment thou hast opened up to us; for the days of peace and gladness we have had on earth, and for those whom thou hast given to love us and to be beloved by us. We thank Thee for our talents, and the opportunities afforded us for improving them to our own good and Thy glory. We thank Thee for Thy mercy in pardoning our sins, and for Thy grace in leading us to repentance and enabling us to enjoy a new life of peace in Thee, and of obedience to Thy will. Comfort, O God, all who mourn, by bringing to the knowledge and love of Thyself as their supreme good, their only rest, and their eternal reward. Prepare us every day for the day of chastisement, of death, and of judgment. When thou art pleased to take from us any of those blessings which we now so much enjoy, grant that being taught to know Thyself in them all, and to rest on Thy love which bestowed them, we may thereby be enabled to hold fast our trust in Thee, the unchangeable and all sufficient God, when we cannot trace Thee; and from the heart to say at all times, "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away: blessed be the name of the Lord!" "Our Father," &c.

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O THOU who slumberest not nor sleepest, before whom our hearts are ever open, and to whom all our ways are known, grant that we, feeling our responsibility towards Thee for all we are and do, may without delay take heed to Thy warnings, believe Thy promises, and with reverence hear Thy voice; so that obeying Thee in the day of Thy merciful visitation of us here, we may be accepted of Thee in the day of Thy righteous judgment of us hereafter.

*Amen.*

### HYMN, or *Psalm xc. 10-12.*

AS long as life its term extends,  
Hope's blest dominion never ends;  
For while the lamp holds on to burn,  
The greatest sinner may return  
Life is season God hath giv'n  
To fly from hell, and rise to heav'n;  
That day of grace fleets fast away,  
And none its rapid course can stay.

The living know that they must die;  
But all the dead forgotten lie;  
Their mem'ry and their name is gone,  
Alike unknowing and unknown.  
Their hatred and their love is lost,  
Their envy bury'd in the dust;  
They have no share in all that's done  
Beneath the circuit of the sun.

Then what thy thoughts design to do,  
Still let thy hands with might pursue;  
Since no device nor work is found,  
Nor wisdom underneath the ground.  
In the cold grave, to which we haste,  
There are no acts of pardon past;  
But fix'd the doom of all remains,  
And everlasting silence reigns.

### MATTHEW, XXV. 1-13.

THEN, shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. 2. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. 3. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took

no oil with them: 4. But the wise took oil in their vessels with the lamps. 5. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. 6. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. 8. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. 9. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. 10. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. 11. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. 12. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. 13. Watch therefore; for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

### HEBREWS, III. 7-19.

WHEREFORE (as the Holy Ghost saith, To-day, if ye will hear his voice, 8. Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: 9. When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. 10. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation and said, They do alway err in their heart; and

they have not known my ways. 11. So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.) 12. Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. 13. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To-day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. 14. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end: 15. While it is said, To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation. 16. For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. 17. But with whom was he grieved forty years? Was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? 18. And to whom swear he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? 19. So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

### EPHESIANS, V. 8-17.

FOR, ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light; 9. (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth;) 10. Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. 11. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. 12. For it is a shame even to speak of those



things which are done of them in secret. 13. But all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light. 14. Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. 15. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, 16. Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. 17. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.

## SERMON VI.

“SLEEP ON NOW, AND TAKE YOUR REST.” -- Mark xiv. 41.

“THOU KNEWEST NOT THE TIME OF THY VISITATION.”

-- Luke xix. 44.

THESE words suggested to us as the subject of our meditation last Lord's day those momentous periods, which may be termed times of visitation, and which occur more or less frequently in the inner life of every man, when God is calling us, as it were, to awake out of our moral sleep, and to know the things which belong to our everlasting peace.

We then noticed the time when saving truth is revealed to the conscience, as constituting such a solemn crisis in our history; and we will now take for our thoughtful and prayerful consideration a few additional illustrations of the

same principle from the same texts: -- For example, *a time of temptation is a time of visitation*, when we are specially called upon to awake out of our sleep. It may be said with truth that every day and every hour contains in it elements of temptation, or means of trying our spirit whether it be of God. For as long as there is a right and wrong way of thinking, feeling, doing, speaking, suffering or enjoying, so long must every moment of our life afford an opportunity of our living and acting in the one state or the other.

Whatever, therefore, *tries* our spirit, and is an occasion given us to determine what our character really is, may be truly termed a time of temptation. But over and above this constant trial of our being in the sight of God, there occur in every man's history special seasons when, as it were, Satan tries to sift us as wheat, and when the trial will make manifest whether we are the wheat, or "the chaff which the wind can drive to and fro." There is no escaping those seasons. It is true that no man who knows himself, and the awful power of sin within him -- who abhors the evil and cleaves to the good -- will ever knowingly enter into or go in the way of temptation. He who does so is either a fool or a hypocrite -- he is either, from a proud self-reliance, ignorant of his danger from sin, or, if aware of it, has made up his mind secretly to fall by it. But the humble-minded sincere man will ever pray, with a deep sense of his weakness, "Lead us not into temptation." Yet God in His providence

does often lead us into circumstances which to us are full of danger -- when the weak points in our character may be assaulted with all the combined and subtle forces of evil -- when the attack may be made with daring suddenness, or under cover of deceitful delusions, and by means of most cunning wiles -- when nothing more is revealed than the right and the wrong, which, thank God! never can be concealed from an honest, truthful mind. For at such moments, even amidst the storm of passion when the attack is most vehement, the still small voice of conscience is heard, like the calm and authoritative voice of the commander in the midst of the battle, bidding us be firm, and obey our God. In such times of battle there is always a crisis. It may be very brief. Napoleon used to say that the tide of battle turned decidedly one way or the other generally in a few minutes. So it often happens in those life-struggles -- when the thought we indulge in -- the desire we cherish but for a moment -- the feeling with which we listen to the promises and bribes of iniquity tempting us to be traitorous and disloyal to our conscience and our Saviour -- when the single step we take to our right or left, in advance or in retreat -- may determine not only what we are, but also what we shall be for life, yea, for ever! These are, indeed, solemn times of visitation, when heaven and hell, peace or woe, are struggling for possession within the unseen battlefield of our own hearts, and when

victory or defeat will prove of infinitely greater importance to our liberty and well-being than any which have ever been recorded in the page of history. Oh! if a voice from the unseen -- from loving saint or guardian angel -- could address us at such a time as this, it might be in such words as these -- “Awake, thou that sleepest!” For if we are wrathful against the encroachments of sin, and take to ourselves the whole armour of God, and having done all, if we *stand*, then we shall come out of the conflict with a calmness of spirit, a thankfulness of heart, a peace which passeth understanding -- then shall we be stronger than ever, more able to endure, and more certain of being conquerors in the end. We shall realize within us a strength not of the flesh, but of the Spirit, which is a sure pledge of final victory; so that if, in the midst of conflict, we sent forth the almost despairing cry, “Who shall deliver me from the body of this death!” yet after it we shall know that there is one who is “mighty to save,” and the joyful acknowledgement will be heard, “Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through Jesus Christ our Lord!” But woe be to us if temptation finds us in a careless, slothful state, and if we refuse to be roused from our lethargy and to watch and pray. Then may we fall, and never again rise! The slavery of sin may be found intolerable, but habits like an iron chain are wound around the soul, and hold it fast. The service of Satan may be found cruel and degrading, but

yet he will lead his victim through his own depraved will. The new nature by grace having been refused, the old nature of confirmed evil habits will have been contracted, and change no more. For the dread sentence goes forth, "Sleep on and take your rest;" and the lament is heard over the sinner, "O that thou, even thou, at least in this thy day, hadst known the things of thy peace! But now they are for ever hid from thine eyes!"

The circumstances in which the apostles were placed during the last evening they were with their Master before the crucifixion, afford a striking illustration of such a time of visitation. The Last Supper might naturally seem to us to have been a time when temptation was impossible. Can the fancy produce a sense of more profound repose and perfect peace? When did such a holy church meet together? And Jesus himself was there, revealing his glory with a fulness and grandeur never before witnessed. What prayers -- what promises -- what a pouring forth of love in word and deed! Can Satan intrude himself into such a paradise as this? Can temptation mar such a time of holy enjoyment? Can an evening so calm be the prelude of a day of storm? Alas! it was so. The Lord, who knew what was in man, and whose divine eye penetrated the unseen, made the amazing announcement that Satan desired even then to sift them as wheat. He revealed to their astonishment how the cunning attack would scatter them all, make one deny

Him, and another betray Him. Nay, He pointed out the traitor, Judas, and told the self-confident yet affectionate Peter, that ere a few hours passed over he would deny his Master, yea, deny Him thrice! Then came the scene already alluded to, in the garden of Gesthemane. It came with a work for the disciples to perform for another, that of watching sympathizingly with their Master, and it came also with a work to perform for themselves, that of watching the approach of a severe temptation. With reference to the neglect of the one, our Lord complained saying, "What, could ye not watch with me one hour?" But, with reference to the other, he affectionately warned them, saying, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation; the spirit is willing," but that was not enough, for "the flesh is weak," and hence the question and command, "Why sleep ye? Rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation!" Our Lord in mercy warned Peter especially to beware. "Simon," he said, "sleepest *thou*?" -- at such a time, and after all He had already said to him! But, alas! These divine warnings were neglected. And so Judas betrayed our Lord, and was lost for ever. Peter denied Him, and was saved by a hearty repentance.

Again, *a special opportunity given to us of doing good is a time of visitation*. Now, if in the history of every man there occur in God's providence seasons of peculiar temptation, so also are peculiar opportunities afforded to us

of doing some special good. There are works which the hand *findeth* to do, and which God seems to lay at our feet, by us to be accepted or neglected. It is not possible, nor is it necessary, to specify those works, they are so many and various. It may be given us, for example, to bestow charity, to manifest sympathy, to give advice, to write a letter, to pay a visit -- to do a something, in short, of apparently no great importance, but which we feel *ought* to be done by us, there and then. Upon such trifles as those the usefulness of our life, in God's sight, may turn. They are the fractions which, when saved by us, make up the wealth of years, and the treasures which are to last forever. If, by the grace of God we are habitually awake to a sense of our responsibility, and are not like men speaking and walking in our sleep, but earnestly dealing with the realities of things -- if we promptly accept of the work, whatever it be, which God thus gives us to do -- then shall we know in our own experience how small talents when improved rapidly increase themselves, and what a noble thing it is to live, and how every man will have work assigned him in the kingdom of God according to his capacity, and how he may be greatly "blessed in his deed." Upon the other hand, who can calculate the loss to the individual himself or to others, if, through selfishness or sloth, the opportunity is neglected, and the work left undone! If his ease, and not duty, is sought, verily he shall have *his* reward; but alas, if reward

it can be called, it is one bestowed not in mercy, but in judgment. That which he has will be taken away. His opportunities of receiving or of doing good will, through his own neglect, practically diminish until they are lost for ever, and the dread sentence is passed, "Sleep on, and take thy rest," thy sloth will be disturbed no more! As an illustration of this, consider the demand which may be made by a person in sickness, not only upon our sympathy, but our Christian counsel and thoughtful consideration. This person may be in the same house with us, and not only an acquaintance, but a friend, or relation. He is visibly dying. That body will soon be out of sight, and before a few weeks the immortal soul will begin its endless existence. In our conscience we have, perhaps, an overpowering persuasion that all is not well with his character; we may not speak of it to others, and fear almost to whisper it to ourselves, that there is something in his life which, if Christianity be true, hazards his eternal happiness. What is to be done? Can we do nothing? Have we not a word of truth to utter? Does not true love call for a deeper work than any mere kindnesses, attentions, or labours for his bodily health, however self-sacrificing? We say, perhaps, that we would give the world to do it, that there is that at our heart the utterance of which would be unspeakable relief; we feel instinctively that there is something which this beloved object ought to know, to feel, to believe, to rest on, and that



this we have the means of giving. But we “do not like to do it;” we have “an unconquerable shyness,” -- a painful timidity” -- yet we will “try it, by and by, perhaps to-morrow;” and thus the work is left undone! While thus consulting our own feelings and likings, the time of visitation is rapidly passing away; the invalid becomes weaker, and the mind less capable of thinking, and the tongue loses its power of utterance, and the ear can bear no sound beyond the faintest whisper; the eyes are closed; and at last death -- awful death -- arrives, and the soul departs to give an account of itself to God! With him -- our friend -- the day of grace has ended; eternity has begun, and all its tremendous realities have opened upon his spirit. But our history and his can henceforth never more be separated, for we too must give an account of all we might have done, when the question is asked, “Where is thy brother?” Oh! as we noiselessly enter that silent chamber, and, hardly breathing, stand beside that silent body, or follow it to the grave, and leave it there till time shall be no more, might not our inmost soul quail at the consequences of our sloth, as a voice seems to address us from beneath the fresh sod, “Sleep on now, and take your rest; you would not be troubled by the living, and you will not be troubled by the dead!”

I would notice further, that *a time of affliction is a time of visitation*. We all feel it to be such. The affliction may

be a visitation of dangerous sickness or confirmed bad health to ourselves, or of a like sorrow to some one more dear to us than life itself; or when it may come in the form of death to those we thus love, leaving this world strangely empty to us; or our affliction may be the loss of money, and, therefore, of a thousand precious blessings which money can purchase, and which none despise; or worse still, our sorrow may be the visitation of sin -- laying hold of a friend, a brother, a child, a parent, a husband or wife, with his iron grasp -- touching them with his leprous and polluted hand, withering with his sirocco breath all that is fresh and beautiful, and smiting the soul with a corruption more foul and loathsome than that of the tomb. But whatever may be the sorrow, the time it comes to our heart or home, -- whether in the beggars's rags or in garments of rich mourning -- with the skeleton head of disease and death, or with the dreary look of the slave of sin -- is a time of solemn visitation. It tries our spirit. It weighs us in the balance, and decides whether we are of God or of the world. It searches us and reveals whether our peace is in God or in the creature; and if it finds us -- and who of us has not been so found? -- seeking the things of our peace where God has never placed them -- foolishly building on sand, vainly hewing out cisterns which are broken and can hold no water and spending our money for that which is not bread, and labouring for that which satisfieth not! -- oh! what a

visitation is this from the living God, to destroy all our refuges and sins -- to break up our delusions! and what a call to return to Himself -- to know Himself -- to cast our care on Him, and at once to build on Him, the rock, and to drink from Him, the living fountain -- in one word to cease the folly and shame of living in the perishable, and to learn the wisdom, and the strength, and the joy, of having God our Father as our never-failing, ever satisfying portion! O blessed day of sorrow, which leads a man to know the things of His peace before they are forever hid from his eyes! Then will the sufferer be able to exclaim, with Hezekiah, "what shall I say? He hath both spoken unto me, and Himself hath done it. O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit: so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live. Behold, for peace I had great bitterness; but Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption; for Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back."

But, at such a time, we may refuse to awake from our slumber. We may seek to evade the searching eye of God, and either faint under or despise the chastening of the Lord, but neither meet the purpose of our Father, nor be subject to Him as God. Or we may fall back upon the things which are left to us, and on these take our selfish and rebellious stand; or, with apparent bravery, try and master the sorrow by activity in business, by the excitements of society, by a

change of scene, and by faith in the power of time to heal the wound. But in all this there is no waking up to see the trial in its true light, by seeking God in it, and listening to His voice, and seeking first His kingdom and righteousness. The whole good of the trial is thus lost, for God himself is not found as the eternal good, peace and rest of the soul. And so the day of visitation passes, and the things of our peace are hid from our eyes, and the sentence is pronounced, "Sleep on, and take your rest!" "Why should ye be chastened any more? You will only sin more and more."

Once more -- *A time of prosperity is a time of visitation.* For we are tried not only when want assails us like an armed man, but also when wealth becomes an inmate of our dwelling -- not only when sickness comes with a look of pain, or old age with tottering steps, but when we possess robust health in joyous youth or in the strong repose of manhood -- not when bitter disappointments, like a chafing tide, foam against us and threaten to drive us, like foundering wrecks, upon the rocks, but when a favouring tide and fresh breeze, beneath blue skies and warm sunshine, send us onwards, with every sail set, on our prosperous voyage. Such a time is one of solemn visitation, in which we may know how true the Saviour's saying is, that it is "hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." Yes! it *is* hard when we are thus rich in God's good

providence -- when all things go well with us -- then to possess the spirit of poverty and emptiness which prepares a man to enter that kingdom whose riches are all spiritual, and whose possessions and glory are God himself. Oh, it is not easy to enjoy all our temporal gifts as God wishes us to enjoy them, in consistency with the reality and the truth of things -- as immortal beings ought to enjoy them, not making idols of them -- as “wise men” ought to enjoy them, not perverting them to our ruin -- not making the the very means of our becoming more covetous, vain, proud, prayerless, godless, ungrateful to God, and unmindful of the Giver. No doubt, there are times when the most thoughtless man is compelled to acknowledge God’s goodness. He looks at his full cup with wonder. He thinks of all the punishment he has deserved, and contrasts it with all the mercies which he has received; and as he puts the cup to his lips to drink, he may indeed look up and say, “Thank God!” Some may do this seriously, feelingly, and some with the formality of a grace before a rich banquet, of which the speaker seems ashamed and disposed to apologize for even this approach to the scandal of being thought *really* grateful to God for such blessings. And thus what seems to be a sense of gratitude is often but gladness in the gift, without any grateful love to the giver *for His own sake*, and apart from that which He bestows. It is but the worship of self under the name of the true God. So it is not easy for us,

because we are so short-sighted, so unbelieving, so desperately enslaved by the things seen and temporal, to know the things of our real peace, and to cling to them in the day when visited by prosperity. Instead of saying, "Soul, love thy God, " we are more inclined to say, "Soul, take thine ease."

Now, if a man is so stupid as not to awaken to a sense of God's loving and righteous dealings with him -- to see how impossible it is that He who is so good and wise could ever bestow upon him mercies in order to destroy his soul, and make the receiver self-indulgent and godless -- to see the wickedness of thus robbing God of his gifts, and putting them to so base a use; if, in short, prosperity as well as adversity fails to make him know the things of his peace -- why think it strange that he should be righteously given up to the spirit of slumber, as he sentence is pronounced, "Sleep on, and take thy rest; thou shalt awake no more!"

Finally, *The time of death is a time of visitation*. Till then, repentance is possible, and salvation may be attained. But once that line is passed which separates time from eternity, the sins of the impenitent can never be forgiven, nor his soul be any more redeemed. Oh! what an hour this is, when God visits us for the last time on earth! He may send before Him messengers of sickness and pain, of slow decline or burning fever, to warn us of His approach; or He may come suddenly amidst the roar of the hurricane, or the

wild confusion of some dreadful accident; or at midnight, when all the house is still, the voice may be heard, saying, “Behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him; this night thy soul shall be required of thee!” In any case, a visitation which ends our short history on earth, and begins our endless history elsewhere, and which fixes at once the character we shall bear for ever, is one inexpressibly solemn to us all. For to all it must come; a trite saying, and a common thought, yet expressing a fact which none of us can realize in all its awful reality! And how shall this time of visitation find us? Shall it find us like men who are awake, watching and waiting for their Lord, and ready “immediately” to receive Him? Shall it find us ready with the reply to His summons, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus?” Or shall it find us asleep like the foolish virgins, and our hearts charged with surfeiting and drunkenness like the unprincipled servants? Shall the things of our peace be for ever concealed from our eyes, or be for ever revealed? Shall we sleep on, and take our rest in Jesus, to awake with joy on the resurrection morning, or shall we sleep on in the sleep of eternal death, and awake “among those whose damnation slumbereth not,” and who can sleep no more? “Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.” “Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee life!” Amen. -- Editor.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

### THE TWIN BROTHERS.

WHEN Abraham and Sarah his wife were both getting very old, there was born to them a little boy. They were very glad to have this child, not only because he was given to them in their old age, but because he had been promised to them by God, and their faith had been long tried. So glad were they, when their son was born, that they called him Isaac, that is, "Laughter." But as the boy grew up, I do not know that he answered much to his name. I think he was a quiet, gentle, thoughtful child, and as he became older, was fond of going away by himself, and musing in the fields. He was doing this when his father's faithful servant came home from Syria, bringing Rebecca with him, who was to be Isaac's wife. I tell you these things, because my story at present is to be about two little children -- twin brothers -- that were born to Isaac and Rebecca, and in the account of their lives in the Bible, the character of their father and mother comes out. Isaac, like many pensive retiring



persons, was not very firm: and Rebecca, of a stronger nature, though a good woman, was too managing.

The twin boys' names were Esau and Jacob. Not much is known of them when they were children. But by and by, their dispositions showed themselves. Esau was a bold boy, liked to ramble from home, and grew up to be a skilful hunter in the fields. Jacob was a quiet and cunning, said little, but thought and planned by himself. One thing he often reflected on. His mother had told him that God had made known to her, that though he was the younger, he was to get the birthright, that in Isaac's family meant so much. It meant that he was to be the father of a great nation, from which the great Messiah was to come. I do not know how far Jacob valued this last honour, but he thought it would be grand to get the dignity of the birthright, and be the head of all the family. Now this dignity belonged to Esau as the first-born. But one day, when he had been hunting in the fields, he came home faint with hunger, and going to his brother's tent, he saw a nice mess of pottage that Jacob had been preparing, and asked to have some. You at once think that Jacob would give it, would be glad to have food ready for his hungry brother. So he was, but he was wily, and thought he would not give it for nothing, and said, Sell me your birthright for it. Esau, thinking of nothing but his present need, agreed, saying, What good will this birthright do me, when I am like to die? That was

not right in him, to hold the great honour so cheap, and he deserved to lose his birthright for casting it so lightly away. On reflection, he was afterwards very angry with his brother for taking advantage of his hunger: but he should have been angry with himself, for not valuing more the right to be the heir of Isaac and Abraham.

Another thing made him angrier. His father was now getting infirm and blind through age, and was too fond of his son Esau, because he made nice dishes him from the animals he caught in hunting. Now Isaac had got the great divine blessing from Abraham, and was about to give it to his son. So at this time he thought he would give it to Esau, and bade him go and get him savoury meat, and bring him to eat, and receive his blessing. Esau went, therefore, to hunt, that he might get a nice dish ready for his father. But his mother, who knew all along that God had said the blessing was to go to Jacob, thought in her heart that this would not do, and set herself to make up a plan for preventing Isaac's wish. So she dressed Jacob in Esau's clothes, and made him as like his elder brother as she could, and sent him in to his father with a mess of meat she had made from kid's flesh, to pretend that it was from the fields, and taken in hunting. Jacob was afraid he would be found out; but so cunningly had his mother managed matters, that although Isaac suspected from the voice that it could not be Esau, he was at last persuaded, and gave Jacob

the blessing. When the true Esau came in shortly after, Isaac saw that he had been deceived: but by this time he began to feel how he had been trying to give the blessing away from one to whom God had said it should go, and he trembled to think of his rashness; and although when Esau wept about it, he promised that he would have abundance of good things, as he would not take back the great blessing from Jacob. God did not approve all these wrong things, but his purpose would stand. Esau grew very angry indeed with his brother now, and resolved to kill him; and to show how dreadful a thing passion is, he resolved to kill him when his father died, which he then thought would be soon. So by his mother's advice, Jacob left home to go to his relations in Syria.

I cannot tell you here all that happened to him on the way, and after he reached his uncle's house. One thing only must be mentioned. The first night after he left home, he slept in the open air, as people often do in the east; and God came and spoke to him in a very beautiful vision. After that Jacob, whatever he had been before, knew God and walked in his fear, and God greatly blessed him in Padan-a-ram, where he stayed twenty years. But his early sins gave him great sorrow, even after that long space of time.

For when at God's bidding he was going home again, with his family and his flocks, having become a rich man, he was told that his brother was coming to meet him with four

hundred armed men. Of course, Jacob thought he must be coming to take vengeance on him for his tricks, and his taking away the blessing, and he was very much afraid. What do you think he did in his distress? He first prayed to God, then did every thing he could think of to soften his brother's heart, by sending him presents, and made arrangements to enable some of his family to escape, if Esau would still come on in his rage. But that was not all. He stayed behind the rest, to be alone in prayer. Then a strange thing happened to him. A man appeared, and wrestled with him all the night. In the morning Jacob struggled to hold this man, who was no other than the Son of God in the form of an angel, and the divine angel strove to get away. Of course, he could if he liked, for one touch of his put Jacob's thigh out of joint; but Jacob held him by faith, held him by his own word and that was pleasing to God, and he gave Jacob his blessing, and the new name of Israel, for his strong trust shown in prayer. Jacob knew now that his sins were forgiven, and that the blessing which he had stolen before was now really given to him by God. You may be sure, though he went lame on his feet the next day, he was happy in his soul.

Soon it appeared how, having prevailed with God, he had conquered man also. On came Esau, with his armed troop; but as he met drove after drove, and heard that Jacob had sent them as presents, his wrath began to melt away:

and when at last he saw his brother, and remembered how they had played together, and how they had father and mother yet alive that had loved them and watched over them, all his anger gave way, and the twin brothers fell on each other's necks and wept. Their meeting came in tears, not blood. So may all quarrels end! I think that was really the end of the quarrel between the twin brothers: for though we do not read much about Esau afterwards, we find that he met his brother again at the funeral of their father -- and if any bad feeling yet remained, let us hope it was then buried for ever.

Three things remember in connection with this story. *It is sinful to take wrong means to bring about a right end.* Jacob was to get the blessing, but his mother and he should have left it to God to bring it about in his own way. *The sins of youth often, even when forgiven, chasten us in after years.* Jacob felt that, when he cried for deliverance from his brother's rage. *In all troubles, prayer is the best resource.* Did not Jacob find it so?

-----

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Can you name parents in the New testament to whom a son was born in their old age?
2. What was the name of one of Christ's disciples who was a twin?
3. Who is it that was called a mighty hunter before the Lord?
4. What is Esau called in the New Testament for despising his birthright?
5. By what text in one of John's epistles could you prove Esau to be a murderer?
6. Where is the man who wrestled called God? and where is he called the Angel?
7. Can you name any other person, besides Jacob, whose prayer was stronger than many armed men?
8. What wise woman, by presents and soft words, made peace where bloodshed was intended?

ANSWERS will be found in Luke i.; John xx. 24.; Gen. x.; Heb. xii.; 1 John iii.; Gen. xxxii. and Hosea xii.; Isaiah xxxvii.; 1 Sam. xxv.

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE LESSONS.

1. What did God declare himself to be to Abraham?  
Gen. xv. 1.
2. What did God promise to Abraham? Gen. v. 5.

3. What was Abraham's son called? And how old was Abraham when this child, according to God's power and promise, was born to him? Gen. xxi. 3, 5.

4. Tell the story, in your own words, about Abraham offering up his son. Gen. xxii. 1-18.

*Prayer.*

O LORD, Thou art a God of truth. Thou hatest all deceit, and hast said that liars cannot dwell with Thee. Save us, O Lord, from all lying. Make us true in word and deed. Keep us in childhood from sins which should vex our souls afterwards. Help us to sow, not the seed of remorse for sin, but of gratitude and joy for mercies. Keep us from anger, strife, and hate. Make us loving in heart and speech and life. Hasten the day when all men shall love as brethren, and there shall be feud and war no more: for Jesus' sake.  
*Amen.*

-----

EVENING WORSHIP.

O LORD Jesus Christ! As the day is far spent, we beseech of Thee to abide with us this night; and grant that, whether we awake in this world or the next, we may be still with Thee. *Amen.*

HYMN, or *Psalm cxlv. 17-21.*

SUN of my soul! Thou Saviour dear,  
It is not night if Thou be near:  
Oh! May no earth-born cloud arise  
To hide Thee from thy servant's eyes.

When the soft dews of kindly sleep  
My wearied eyelids gently steep,  
Be my last thought, -- how sweet to rest  
For ever on my Saviour's breast!

Abide with me from morn till eve,  
For without Thee I cannot live;  
Abide with me when night is nigh  
For without Thee I dare not die.

Come near and bless me when I wake,  
Ere through the world my way I take;



Till in the ocean of thy love  
I lose myself in heav'n above.

ACTS, VII. 1-8.

THEN said the high priest, Are these things so? 2. And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, 3. And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee. 4. Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwell in Charran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye dwell. 5. And he gave him none inheritance in it, no not so much as to set his foot on: yet he promised he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child. 6. And God spake this wise, That his seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondge, and entreat them evil four hundred years. 7. And the nation to whom they shall be in bondage will I judge, said God: and after that shall they come forth, and serve me in this place.

8. And so Abraham begat Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat the twelve patriarchs.

### HEBREWS, IX. 1-10.

THEN verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. 2. For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shew-bread; which is called the Sanctuary. 3. And after the second vail, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; 4. Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; 5. And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy-seat; of which we cannot now speak particularly. 6. Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God: 7. But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all

was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: 9. Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; 10. Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.

### GALATIANS, III. 6-9, 27-29.

**EVEN** as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. 7. Know ye therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. 8. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. 9. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. 27. For as many of you have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. 29. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abrahams's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

-----

## *PRAYER.*

WE worship Thee as the Creator of the heavens and the earth. The heavens declare Thy glory. The whole earth is full of Thy glory. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge concerning Thee.

We worship Thee as Redeemer and Sanctifier of our souls, and for the gift of eternal life through Thy Son. We praise Thee that we are born again to a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, which is reserved for us who are kept by Thy power through faith unto salvation.

Giver of every good and perfect gift, we thank Thee for Thy most merciful providence in having given to us the Lord's Day, that we, resting from our ordinary labours, may enjoy the privilege of meeting together along with the Church of Christ for Thy worship. Lord grant that on this day we may ever worship Thee in spirit and in truth, for such worshippers Thou art seeking; that we may ever praise thee with joyful and thankful spirits; and that Thy word may dwell in us richly in all wisdom, being fruitful in good works.

O Lord, may we hold fast our confidence in Thy fatherly love to us through Jesus, in the forgiveness of sins, and in the gift of Thy Holy Spirit. Grant we may now enter into and enjoy these more abundantly -- a true Scripture Rest with Christ in Thee. Grant that as Jesus died and rose from the dead, we too on this day may die with him, burying the old man, rising with Jesus to newness of life. Finally, do Thou so help us, on this and on every day, to dedicate ourselves to Thy blessed service, and to work and worship according to Thy will; that ceasing from our earthly labours we may possess for ever the rest of perfect love, which yet awaits the people of God!

We this night retire to rest, praying Thee, most merciful Father, to forgive all our sins, whether of omission, or commission, all we have done or left undone contrary to Thy holy will. Grant unto us a hearty repentance, and sincere hearts to serve Thee. We thank Thee for our day's mercies, spiritual and temporal, and for all we have received from Thee and enjoyed in Thee, for Thou carest for us. Watch over us, and over all who are dear to us, this night. Comfort all who are in sorrow or anxiety; and may a grateful sense of what thou hast been pleased to bestow on ourselves prompt us to sympathize with and to relieve them. Hear us, Lord! And grant that when we awake we may be satisfied with Thy likeness! "Our Father," &c. *Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

MONDAY.

*Morning.*

**The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer;**

The God of my rock in him will I trust: he is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my saviour; thou savest me from violence.

I will call on the Lord, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies.

When the waves of death compassed me, the floods of ungodly men made me afraid;

The sorrows of hell compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me.

In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried to my God; and he did hear my voice out of his temple, and my cry did enter into his ears.

2 Sam. xxii. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

*Evening.*

**In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed: deliver me in thy righteousness.**

Make thy face to shine upon thy servant: save me for thy mercies' sake.

Let me not be ashamed, O Lord; for I have called upon thee: let the wicked be ashamed.

Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!

Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man; thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.

Ps. xxxi. 1, 16, 17, 19, 20.

TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud nor such as turn aside to lies.**

Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. Selah.

Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie: to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity.

It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man:

It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes.

Ps. xl. 4.      Ps. lxii. 8, 9.      Ps. cxviii. 8, 9.

*Evening.*

**Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.**

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and dust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through or steal:

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

Ps. xxxvii. 3.      Matt. vi. 19, 20, 33, 34.



WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.**

He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord.

What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.

In God I will praise his word; in God I have put my trust: I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.

He that putteth his trust in the Lord shall be made fat.

He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered.

Ps. lv. 22.      Ps. cxii. 7.      Ps. lvi. 3, 4.      Prov. xxviii. 25, 26.

*Evening.*

**Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me; for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.**

I will cry unto God most High; unto God that performeth, all things for me.

God shall send forth his mercy and his truth.

And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of his doing.

The righteous shall be glad in the Lord, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory.

Ps. lvii. 1,2,3.      Ps. lxiv. 9, 19.

THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.**

Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee.

With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.

I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope.

My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning.

Isa. xxvi. 3, 7, 8, 9.      Ps. cxxx. 5, 6.

*Evening.*

**In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.**

Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.

The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord.

All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes: but the Lord weigheth the spirits.

Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established.

Cause me to hear thy loving-kindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee.

Prov. iii. 6.    Isa. l. 10.    Prov. xvi. 1, 2, 3.    Ps. cxliii. 8.

FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in me.**

For thy Maker is thine husband; The Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.

For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee.

In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.

And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children.

Jer. xlix. 11.      Isa. liv. 5, 7, 8. 13.

*Evening.*

**Honour widows that are widows indeed.**

Now, she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day.

The Lord will destroy the house of the proud: but he will establish the border of the widow.

The Lord preserveth the strangers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down.

A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation.

God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out those which are bound with chains; but the rebellious dwell in a dry land.

1 Tim. v. 3, 5.    Prov. xv. 25.    Ps. cxlvi. 9.    Ps. lxxviii. 5, 6.

## SATURDAY.

### *Morning.*

**The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble;  
and he knoweth them that trust in him.**

He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities: and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.

For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.

And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward;  
Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God.

Nah. i. 7.    Mic. vii. 19.    1 Tim. iv. 10.    2 Cor. iii. 4, 5.

### *Evening.*

**Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh.**

For the Lord shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken.

Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation;

There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come near thy dwelling.

For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.

Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.

Prov. iii. 25, 26. Ps. xci. 9,10,11. Heb. x. 35.

# Home Preacher, or Church in the House.

Seventh Week.

Morning Worship.

JESUS CHRIST, our Saviour, Prophet, and example; help us to see the glory of Thy holy subjection to the righteous and loving will of our Father, that so we may loathe our own rebellious self-will, and acknowledge with our hearts that we are nothing, and can do nothing without Thee, and ought to desire nothing but to be like Thee. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm cxix. 33-37.*

LORD, teach me to adore Thy hand,  
From whence my comforts flow,  
And let me in this desert land  
A glimpse of Canaan know.

And O! whate'er of earthly bliss  
Thy sovereign hand denies,  
Accepted at Thy throne of grace  
Let this petition rise:

Give me a calm, a thankful heart,  
From every murmur free;  
The blessings of Thy grace impart,  
And let me live to Thee.

Let the sweet hope, that Thou art mine,  
My path of life attend,  
Thy presence through my journey shine,  
And bless its happy end!

#### GENESIS XV. 1-5.

AFTER those things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. 2. And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? 3. And Abram said, Behold to me thou has given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. 4. And, behold, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir, but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. 5. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the



stars, if thou be able to number them. And he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.

#### GENESIS XXI. 1-5.

AND the Lord visited Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did unto Sarah as he had spoken. 2. For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. 3. And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, who Sarah bare to him, Isaac. 4. And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac, being eight days old, as God had commanded him. 5. And Abraham was an hundred years old when his son Isaac was born unto him.

#### GENESIS XXII. 1-18.

AND it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham. And he said, Behold, here I am. 2. And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of. 3. And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave

the wood for the burnt-offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him. 4. Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off. 5. And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again unto you. 6. And Abraham took the wood of the burnt-offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and they went both of them together. 7. And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering? 8. And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt-offering: so they went both of them together. 9. And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. 10. And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. 11. And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham. And he said, Here am I. 12. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me. 13. And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked and, behold, behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram

and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. 14. And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen, &c.

-----

*Prayer.*

O LORD, to Thee, the King eternal, immortal, and invisible, we, thy feeble, dependent, and sinful creatures, draw nigh. Once more hast Thou opened the eye-lids of the morning, and caused the dayspring to know its place. We approach Thee with thanksgiving for the preservation of the night, and for the mercies of the returning day; and it is our heart's desire and prayer, O our Father, that this fresh period of our appointed time, as it speaks to us of Thy forbearance and unwearied love, may speak also of our gratitude, of our repentance, and of our Christian obedience to Thy most holy laws. O teach us daily to renew the exercise of our penitence and of our faith in Thy Son, our only Hope and Saviour; and may the continual supplies of Thy grace arm us against the sin that doth so easily beset us, and enable us to run with patience the race that is set before us.

While we seek defence against all temptation, we implore of Thee the fortitude needful to bear affliction, and the wisdom to profit by it as we ought. In every cup has thou mingled the waters of bitterness; and if Thine hand is not upon us now, its strokes have fallen in the past, and shall fall again in the future. Teach us, most gracious God, neither to despise Thy chastening, nor to faint when rebuked of Thee. Make us thankful that we enjoy so much, and suffer so little. Incline our hearts to walk in the footsteps of Him who, though a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which He suffered; and may our language, even in the hottest fires of affliction, be His, “Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine be done.” what we ask for ourselves we ask for all Thy suffering children, and especially for any that may be near and dear to us; and our desire is, that we may one and all be joyful in hope and patient in tribulation, and that we may continue instant in prayer.

Bring us all, O our God, to the saving knowledge of thyself by Christ Jesus, granting us forgiveness of sins and inheritance among the sanctified. Then shall we return as Thy ransomed ones, with songs and everlasting joy upon our heads; and having been tried by the endurance of temptation, we shall receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him. This blessing of sanctified affliction, with all the other benefits of Thy

covenant, we humbly ask through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with Thee, O Father, and the Holy Ghost, be glory for ever. *Amen.*

-----

O GOD, who art the author of peace and lover of concord, in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life, whose service is perfect freedom; defend us thy humble servants in all assaults of our enemies; that we, surely trusting in the thy defence, may not fear the power of any adversaries, through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, or *Psalms xciv. 11-15.*

'TIS my happiness below  
Not to live without the cross,  
But the Saviour's power to know,  
Sanctifying ev'ry loss;  
Trials must and will befall;  
But with humble faith to see  
Love inscribed'd upon them all,  
This is happiness to me.

God, in Israel, sows the seeds  
Of affliction, pain and toil;

These spring up, and choke the weeds  
Which would else o'er spread the soil:  
Trials make the promise sweet,  
Trials give new life to pray'r;  
Trials bring me to his feet,  
Lay me low, and keep me there.

Did I meet no trials here,  
No chastisement by the way;  
Might I not, with reason fear  
I should prove a castaway:  
Bastards may escape the rod,  
Sunk in earthly, vain delight;  
But the true-born child of God  
Must not, will not, if he might.

### LAMENTATIONS, III. 22-40.

IT is because of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. 23. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness. 24. The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him. 25. The Lord is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him. 26. It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. 27. It is

good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth. 28. He sitteth alone, and keepeth silence, because he hath borne it upon him. 29. He putteth his mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope. 30. He giveth his cheek to him that smiteth him: he is filled full with reproach. 31. For the Lord will not cast off for ever: 32. But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. 33. For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men. 34. To crush under his feet all the prisoners of the earth, 35. To turn aside the right of a man before the face of the Most High, 36. To subvert a man in his cause, the Lord approveth not. 37. Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not? 38. Out of the mouth of the most High proceedeth not evil and good? 39. Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins? 40. Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord.

#### ROMANS VIII. 14-26.

**F**OR as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. 15. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. 16. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the

children of God: 17. And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ: if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. 18. For I reckon, that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. 19. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. 20. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope; 21. Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. 22. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now: 23. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. 24. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? 25. But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. 26. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

-----



## SERMON VII.

“WHOM THE LORD LOVETH HE CHASTENETH.”

-- Heb. xii. 6.

THE Hebrew Christians were assailed on two sides at once. “Without were fightings: within were fears.” They stood in doubt of the truth of the gospel; they suffered severely as its disciples. To suffer with a convinced mind is easy; to suffer with a wavering, is hard and trying. The apostle has sought first to cure their doubts, and to re-establish their attachment to Christianity, as better than Judaism; and now in the second half of his letter he deals with their trials and suffering for righteousness’ sake. He shows in the glorious chapter before that in which the text is found, how suffering had belonged to the law not less than to the gospel; how all the patriarchs had needed faith, as well as the apostles; and how the whole company of the faithful and their divine Leader gathered around the present set of runners in this martyr-race, with their example, their sympathy, and the assurance of reward. He applies the lesson with warmth, as well as tenderness, and in his tones of sympathy and exhortation there mingles something of complaint and of reproof. “Ye have forgotten the exhortation that speaketh unto you as unto children, My

son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him; for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.”

Selecting the saying -- “Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth” -- as the subject of our meditation, and fixing attention on some of its properties: --

1. We observe, *first*, that this saying is an *old* saying. It was not Paul who first used it, even by inspiration of God. It goes back to an earlier day, and to an older book. It is a saying of Solomon, found in the third chapter of the Proverbs, “My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord, neither be weary of his correction; for whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.” It is possible even that the saying goes back as far as the beginning of the Jewish history, for many of the proverbs of Solomon may have been current before in another form, and only received a new setting in his inspired collection. Still, if this saying had no existence before, it was of great antiquity now in Paul’s days. It had been in the hands of the faithful as they read their Bibles, and also in their mouths, amid the changes and chances of a thousand years. Solomon in his own afflictions had remembered it: the faithful, also, amidst the turmoil and confusion of the later days of the kingdom and the desolations of the captivity; and still farther down, those who amidst great depression “waited for the consolation of

Israel.” We can fancy many a generation of sufferers repeating to one another this time-hallowed saying, “Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.” It is a great disadvantage to us, as we read the Old Testament, that we cannot tell what texts were favourite texts of the Old Testament church. We have no materials; no sermons preached on them; no religious diaries or correspondence, or other records, in which they frequently appeared. We know what are the favourite texts in our own country; and we have some means of knowing this also in regard to the early Christian church, which has left large commentaries and sermons on scripture. But in regard to the Jewish church, we cannot well say what verses and passages they read most frequently and quoted most constantly; and this knowledge can never now be recovered. But it can hardly be regarded as going too far to say, that his text in Proverbs about affliction was likely to be a favourite one, and to be often on the lips in days of trial. We know how we are evermore quoting some texts ourselves -- “All things work together for good to them that love God” -- “our light affliction worketh out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” -- “Not my will, but thine, be done.” And it may be presumed that the pious of old must have exalted this precious saying to the same rank. If so, we see how similar, after all, are the consolations of the Old Testament and the New. We know far more of the love of God; but the

saints then were not ignorant of it. We are comforted by thinking on it in our troubles; but they had it also to think on, and to trace their troubles up to this bright source.

They walked in the twilight: but they knew their road; and on all their rough and thorny paths they could see written, “Love:” “this is the right way to the city of habitation.”

2. We observe, secondly, that this saying is an *unlikely* saying. When it first repeated we are all apt to say, “This is an hard saying, who can hear it?” It seems contrary to reason. How can love inflict suffering? How can the fountain send forth sweet waters and bitter? And it seems also contrary to faith; for is it not promised that God’s children shall inherit all things, and that the ways of wisdom are pleasantness and her paths peace? If God has all resources, why should they so often be destitute, afflicted, and tormented? In short, this is a great disappointment to those who wish to join God’s household, and to have their portion in the present life; for they are like the mixed multitude that came out of Egypt, and then complained of God’s cruelty to them in the wilderness. And even to God’s genuine children the adversities that gather around them are a great trial of faith; and they are sorely tempted to say, “If we be the Lord’s, why are we thus?” “All these things are against me.” We cannot greatly wonder then, if when heavy distresses and sorrows come upon us, it should be difficult to see love inscribed upon

them all. Thus, the saints of God have been exercised before us. They have forgotten this saying, and found it hard to recall it to mind. We are not singular in our doubts, our misgivings, our secret questions and murmurings, when the hand of God is laid upon us. This, however, is not said to excuse or justify us, but only to save us from concluding that our weak faith is no faith at all, or that we are not God's children, because we find it hard to flesh and blood to accept always and to welcome the saying, that "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."

3. We observe thirdly, that this saying is a true saying. Here is many an unlikely saying true, and none more so than this. It would not be true, if our suffering were not chastening. A holy angel suffering at God's hand would not be consistent with love. But our suffering is all corrective; and we may well say, "Wherefore should a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?" Again, it would not be true, if there were any mixture of malice or vindictiveness in our sufferings, if they were the inflictions of an executioner, and not the remedies of a physician, or the stripes of a father, which indeed they are. And further it would not be true, if God afflicted us beyond what were able to bear, or beyond what was absolutely necessary for our highest welfare; in regard to both of which suppositions, however, the direct opposite is the case. There is a need-be

for our heaviness through manifold temptations or trials; and the love of God appears in His carrying out the needful design, not only in spite of our suffering, but even by means of our suffering. This use or design of suffering must be thoroughly learned, in order to see and understand the loving-kindness of the Lord. If there are evils that cannot be averted save by suffering, and blessings that cannot be gained save by suffering, then it is plain that the principle which chooses suffering to avert those evils otherwise inevitable, and to gain those blessings otherwise unattainable, can be nothing but love. The greatest of all evils is eternal wandering from God. This is hell; and anything that will save men from it is the dictate of love. Now, who has ever been saved from it without suffering and much suffering? When the prodigal son came to himself and said, "I perish with hunger!" I will wander no more; "I will arise and go to my father" -- can we think he would have come to himself and returned had he still sat in riot and plenty, devouring his father's living with harlots? Was not his correction, his coming down even to the husks that the swine do eat, the means of his salvation? And could his father have done a more loving thing towards him, had he been able, than to bring him earlier to this repentance by drying up all the springs of his guilty pleasure? Thus God our Father deals with us, and his dealing is in pure love and pity. Weary and sore-broken,

we return to our Father's house. We rise, from the broken cisterns which can hold no water, to the eternal fountain; and all that we have suffered we then bless God for, and say, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted. Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now I have kept thy word." To a meditative eye there is nothing that so softens the aspect of the misery that is in this world. It is well that it should be there. Here is the prodigal starving and tasting of the bitterness of sin that he may be brought back to his Father! Yes. When we are out of employment; when our schemes miscarry; when the world turns its back on us; when our strength is brought down by sore disease, and our heart darts with remorse and fear; when our home is covered with sackcloth, and wife or child is consigned to the gloomy grave; then is the turning point, the blessed hour of repentance; and the soul is rescued from the wrath to come! Nor is it only once that this sore discipline is needed. Our life is a perpetual wandering from God; and therefore again love hedges up our way with thorns, blights our earthly joys, shatters our dearest hopes, wastes our dearest treasures, that God may be our portion, and that in him we may have all things and abound. But this is only one-half of the uses of adversity. This is like the correction that reclaims the schoolboy from fatal vices; but there is another correction that secures the learning of the needful tasks and lessons. So we must learn on earth the lessons that fit for

heaven, else heaven will be no heaven to us; and nowhere can we learn them save in the school of affliction. Can we learn patience, can we learn humility, can we learn obedience, can we learn entire submission to the will of God, anywhere else but amidst afflictions, necessities, distresses? Or, if we can, could others do it before us? Or could Christ himself, who learned obedience by the things he suffered, and was made perfect through sufferings? Would it then be love in God to leave us bound over by sin to hell, or even to leave us unprepared by holiness for heaven? And must he not use the rod, if he is to save the child? Those who neither believe in hell nor in heaven, whose only hope is to eat and drink and indulge animal sensations for a few fleeting years, whose god is their belly, and who mind earthly things, may be contented to be left alone; but every true child of God will prefer the correction that recalls from going down to the pit, and sweetens for the inheritance of the skies. Thus reason and faith alike declare this saying true. The experience of the greatest saints declares it true; for have not the greatest endured the hardest flight of affliction? The experience of all saints on earth declares it true; for is there one that will not attest that tribulation worketh patience? Yea, the experience of all saints in glory declares it true; for how is it save through much tribulation that they have entered into the kingdom!



4. We observe, *fourthly*, that this is a *comfortable* saying. Paul brings it forward to comfort the Hebrew Christians. “My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord; nor faint when thou art rebuked of him; *for* whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.” There are still those who despise the chastening of the Lord, who harden themselves against its loving tendency, and refuse to receive correction and return. But there are still more who faint when God rebukes them, and give way when the loving hand of God touches them. Paul here chiefly concerned himself with those who faint in the day of adversity, and to such he still says, “Faint not, for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth!” Is not this a truly comfortable doctrine? If we believed that God was afflicting us more than others for our sins, this would depress; or if we believed that no superior advantage would accrue to us from our sufferings, this might lead us to complain; or if we had no security one way or other, but regarded ourselves as the sport of blind chance or fate, this might tantalize us and hold us in continual doubt! But here we have God’s word for it, that our chastening is the fruit of his own love--the exercise of his fatherly prerogative to consult our good in the best and wisest manner; and can we, in the face of such an assurance, repel comfort, and sink in dejection and despondency? It is impossible, if only we believe. Nothing can hinder such a doctrine from being most comfortable but unbelief; and that, of course, will turn

the most comfortable truths into gloom and darkness and the shadow of death. When the disciples saw Jesus walking on the sea, and thought it was a spirit, they were affrighted, and cried out for fear. Here was the effect of ignorance or unbelief: but no sooner did they recognize their loving Lord, and receive him into the ship, than all was peace and joy! So let us, as we behold Jesus walking at midnight on the waves of our afflictions, no longer yield to the temptation to think it a spirit and a stranger, but open our ears to the voice of our own gracious Lord, “It is I, be not afraid!” and then we will come with gladness to our desired haven!

5. We observe, *fifthly* and lastly, that it is an *ever to be remembered* saying. The Hebrews had forgotten it, and many forget it still. Which of us has not, at some time or other, forgotten this saying, and exclaimed with Job, “Let me alone, for my days are vanity;” or with Jacob “I shall go down to the grave mourning;” or with Hezekiah, “I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul?” Our memory is exceedingly short both for the lessons of God’s word and the deliverances of his providence. We lose sight of the blessing of past afflictions; and when God’s hand is again upon us, “We are not!” But we ought to bear in remembrance, that so long as we are in the world we shall have tribulation, for the trial of our faith is not yet perfect, and Christ is not yet fully formed in us the hope of glory! Our path will lie to the end through scenes of grief and

sorrow, by the sickbed and the deathbed, and the grave's mouth; and no fiery trial that is to try us should be accounted strange. Job's messengers will come to our habitation, announcing the wreck of property and the loss of children. We shall sit in the dust and lament our sores; and where comforters are looked for, there may be tormentors and messengers of Satan to buffet us. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but never too many; and the end makes all good, for the Lord delivereth him out of them all. Happy is the man that in the midst of all, and in the face of all, can say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him!" "This also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts, who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working!" "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us!" O let us remember the saying of the text amidst the afflictions of time; and then we shall never forget it amidst the beatitudes of eternity. Then shall the wondrous love of God in Christ Jesus, that made us go through fire and through water to the wealthy place, excite everlasting praises, and the sorrow and sighing that have ended so blissfully shall for ever flee away!

In conclusion, let it be deeply impressed on all of us, that the blessing of affliction depends upon conversion. Many suffer, and suffer acutely, whose afflictions are wholly lost. Cain was grievously depressed; but he went out from the presence of the Lord. Saul suffered

unspeakable dejection and gloom; but as he did not humble himself before God, no light rises upon his darkness. There is nothing more truly mournful, nothing more heart-rending, than unsanctified sorrow. Scenes of almost intolerable grief have been seen in the families of the pious, where the limit of human agony seemed nearly to be reached, and a pang more would have been destruction. But rather would the thoughtful man witness this over again which has yielded the peaceable fruit of righteousness, than stand amid apparently lighter affliction, that is succeeded by the song and the dance and the round of worldly gaiety, and the entire closing up of every avenue that God had sought to tear open for the entrance of his truth! From such hardening of heart, and searing of conscience, and sleep of the soul, amidst the false enchantments of a sorceress-world, may God deliver all whom we love; and may affliction when it comes, come effectually, come benignantly, to rouse from the torpor of hopeless death, and to send home, though in thunder tones, the needful cry, "Prepare to meet thy God." *Amen.* --JOHN CAIRNS, D.D.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

### OF TWO BROTHERS THAT DIED ON MOUNTAINS.

NOT a few persons, in different circumstances, have died on mountains. I suppose, when God sent the great flood on a wicked world, there were many who fled from the rising waters up to the hills, only to be followed by the devouring seas. In days of persecution, mountains have been refuges for the oppressed, and when Jesus comes to judgment numbers of his children will be found sleeping there. In peaceful and ordinary times, shepherds have perished in snow-storms on the heights when caring for their flocks, and wanderers losing their track have left their bones among the rocks. We have heard of late of various deaths on the Alpine steeps -- some very sad. But my present story is to tell of two deaths on mountains, in very different circumstances from any of these, which happened to two brothers, one after the other. Both of them walked up the slopes of the hills, knowing that at the top they were to lie down and die, at the word of the Lord.

These two brothers were Aaron and Moses. I have told you already about the last of these, when he was a little babe. You will now hear of him when he was an old man, and his brother Aaron was a little older than he; and the two had been employed together by God to bring his people

out of Egypt, and lead them through the wilderness. Moses was sent by God as a great prophet and ruler; and Aaron was made the high priest of Israel. In these offices thy had been among the people for nearly forty years, all which time they had been going with their great charge from place to place in the desert, where many strange events happened. God had caused the people to stay so long in the wilderness because they had refused, from unbelief and fear, to go in to the land of promise when he first led them to it, and he “sware in his wrath” that every person then more than twenty years old should die in the desert. There were two exceptions -- but these were not Moses and Aaron. The shutting out of these two great men, however, came about from another and special cause, which I must now try to explain.

The people of Israel, as already said, had been a long time in the wilderness. But at last they were near the borders of inhabited countries, through some of which they were to pass into the land of Canaan. In the place, however, where their camp was, there was no water. Now that was a great want where were so many people, and it is not wonderful that should have felt sorely tried and troubled. But they did what was very wrong: they became angry with Moses and Aaron, and after all that God had done for them, they said, We wish that we had died of the plague, and not have been brought into a strait like this.

The two brothers were much moved and vexed by these rash words, and fell on their faces to the ground, while the glory that showed God's presence appeared to them. For God had heard the murmurings of the people, and was displeased. Yet he dealt with them in mercy, and told Moses to take the rod of the Lord, and along with Aaron to gather the people together before a rock that was near, and to speak to the rock in their presence, when water would flow forth in abundance. Once before, Moses at God's command had brought water from a rock by smiting it, and that water had been a stream to supply the people for many a day, as they went through the desert. This time God bade Moses to speak to the rock; instead of doing which, he spoke hot words to the people, called them rebels, and said, Must we fetch you water out of this rock? Then, like one in a rage, he struck the rock twice. The water on that gushed out, and the people and their cattle drank. It was a great miracle of mercy.

But it was on account of the behaviour of Moses and Aaron at this time, that God said he would not allow them to bring the people into the land of promise. He told them that they had not believed him, had not trusted him to send the water from the rock on their calmly speaking to it, but had become angry and struck it twice, or perhaps, as I have heard it explained, had not in their heat of feeling intended or expected it to bring water from the rock at all, but had

smitten it in blind anger, and therefore they must die before crossing the Jordan. For God takes notice of sin in his own people, and will correct it. Moses and Aaron were very sorry not to go with the people into their goodly heritage, and Moses prayed very earnestly that God would allow him to go and see it, but God would not grant his wish, and said to him not to pray more about it.

It was not long after this that the people made a journey, and came to the bottom of a mountain called Hor, near the coasts of Edom. Here a solemn thing took place. God told Moses that Aaron, his brother, must go up to the top of the mount and die, and showed him what to do. So in clear daylight, and before all the people, Moses took Aaron and his son Eleazar, Aaron being dressed in his priestly robes; and they three went away from the camp, and began to climb the sides of the mountain, the whole nation watching them as they went up. How strangely must all the three have felt! At last they reached the top; and there Moses took the priest's robes from off Aaron, and clothed his son with them, and then the father lay down and breathed his last. The touch of God loosed the bonds of life, and his spirit went away to join the just that had gone before him. The people that saw three go up, saw only two come down; knew that Aaron had departed from earth, and mourned a whole month for him.



It was after this a good while that Moses was taken away. The people had journeyed still nearer to the land which God had given to Abraham their father, and had come close to a range of mountains called Abarim. One lofty mountain of this range was called Nebo, and its loftiest point was Pisgah. So one day God told Moses to go up to that high peak, and look from it all to the north and west, and he would see the goodly country of promise, although he could not be allowed to enter it. Moses, therefore, set out alone, and went up to the top of the mountain, and feasted his eyes with the fair sight. He had bidden farewell to those below, and had left his successor Joshua with a charge to do rightly and bravely, for he knew he was not to come down from the mountain again. Nor did he return -- for after he had gazed on the land God had given to his people, God closed his eyes to the light of earth, where he then lay, and the great leader of Israel was no more. No one but God saw him die; but the people knew he was dead because he had foretold his death, and did not come back. Nor were they allowed to get his body and bury it. Perhaps they would have made a wrong use of his tomb, if they had been permitted to prepare it. They did not even know where he was laid. No person knows where to this day. For God himself buried him. But Christ knows the spot, and at the last day the lonely grave in the mountains of Moab will yield up its dead.

Dear children, you have one day to die. I do not know in what circumstances, at what age, in what place you are to meet with death, but you have to meet it. Do you think you will be able to meet it as calmly as these two brothers, who walked up to the mountain-tops to lay down their lives? You may, you will, if Jesus be with you. With him you need not fear dying all alone. Without him, you would not be safe from fear, though all your friends were round about you. Pray to have Jesus near you, helping you, when you are called to die; and though it should be far in a desert, or on the lonely sea, or upon a great mountain all alone, you shall fear no evil.

-----

### QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. How do we know that Aaron was older than Moses?
2. How old was Moses when he died?
3. Where do we read about Aaron's being made a high priest?
4. Where was water first brought from a rock, for supplying Israel in the desert?
5. Can you find a text which makes it likely that this first water followed the people in a stream?

THE questions may be readily answered by consulting Exod. vi.;  
Deut. xxxiv.; Exod. xxviii.; Exod. xvii.; 1 Cor. x. 4.

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE LESSONS.

1. How did Abraham manifest his trust in God and belief in his promises? Heb. xi. 17-19; Rom. iv. 20, 21.

2. How was Abraham justified? By the Grace of God in whom he trusted? Or by the merits of his own works? Rom. iv. 3-5.

3. Who are the seed of Abraham according to the spirit? Rom. iv. 16.

4. For whom might some die? Rom. v. 7.

5. For whom did Christ die? Rom. v. 8.

6. What is the pledge of every promise relating to those who have confidence in God? Rom. viii. 32.

-----

### *Prayer.*

**O GOD, Thou hast appointed unto all men once to die. We know that Thou wilt bring us to death, and to the house appointed for all living. We do not know the time nor manner of our death, but Thou knowest. The number of our months is with Thee. We would not have it**

otherwise. Our times are best in thy hand. Blessed by thy name, that thou hast revealed to us One who can save us from all harm, and fear in dying. We praise Thee for Jesus; for his death which is past, and for his life which is for evermore. Through his death may the sting of death be taken away from us. May He prepare us for the hour of dying, and be close beside us when it comes. May He then say to us, Fear not, and stay our weak hearts by his Holy Spirit! May our dust sleep in Jesus, wherever it may lie, and our spirit go to be with Him, which is far better, till He come again to raise our bodies and receive us wholly to Himself, that where He is there we may be also. All this we ask for his sake only. *Amen.*

-----

## EVENING WORSHIP.

O GOD, whose knowledge is unlimited, whose power is infinite, and whose grace is all-sufficient; we beseech Thee to deliver us from all the temptations of the devil, the world, and the flesh. We acknowledge our own weakness, but glory in Thy strength. O Lord! In mercy never try us beyond our strength, not afflict us beyond our patience nor correct us but with a father's rod. Rescue us from the evils

we have done, and preserve us from those which we have deserved, that we, living here before thee by Thy grace, in purity of mind and body, may, at the day of judgment, be presented pure and spotless by the blood of the Lamb.  
*Amen.*

*HYMN, or Psalm xcii. 12-15.*

BLEST be Thy love, dear Lord,  
That taught us this sweet way,  
Only to love thee for Thyself,  
And for that love obey.

O Thou, our souls' chief hope!  
We to Thy mercy fly;  
Where'er we are, thou canst protect,  
Whate'er we need, supply.

Whether we sleep or wake,  
To Thee we both resign;  
By night we see, as well as day,  
If Thy light on us shine.

Whether we live or die,  
Both we submit to Thee;  
In death we live, as well as life,

If Thine in death we be.

HEBREWS XI. 11-19.

THROUGH faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. 12. Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea-shore innumerable. 13. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. 15. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. 16. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city. 17. By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, 18. Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: 19. Accounting that

God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

#### ROMANS IV. 1-5, 13-25.

WHAT shall we say then that Abraham, our father as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? 2. For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. 3. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. 4. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. 5. But to him that worketh not, but believeth in him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. 13. For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. 14. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect. 15. Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. 16. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed: not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, 17. (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who

quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were: 18. Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, so shall thy seed be. 19. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: 20. He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; 21. And being fully persuaded, that what he had promised, he was able also to perform. 22. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. 23. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it as imputed to him; 24. But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; 25. Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

#### ROMANS V. 6-8.

**F**OR when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. 7. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. 8. But God commendeth his love



toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

## ROMANS VIII. 31-32.

WHAT shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? 32. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

-----

### *Prayer.*

O LORD, another day is gone; and our work, finished or unfinished, must be laid aside. Soon that night will come in which no man can work; and all our knowledge, device, and wisdom shall be swallowed up in the darkness of the grave. May the prospect fill our minds with solemn awe and godly fear, and may we now prepare to give an account of our stewardship with joy, and not with grief!

O Lord, Thou knowest what wicked and slothful servants we have been, how shamefully we have wasted Thy goods, how wantonly we have trampled on Thine

instructions, how frowardly we have said in our hearts, “My Lord delayeth His coming!” Enter not into judgment with us, O Lord, and let the sins of an unfaithful stewardship be all blotted out of Thy book by the blood of Christ!

Henceforth may we redeem the time, because the days are evil! May we give all diligence to make our calling and election sure! May we not sleep as do others, but may we watch and be sober! And as the night is far spent and the day is at hand, may we cast off the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light! For this end, grant us, O Father, the effectual aids of the blessed Spirit of Christ; and then we shall so number our days as to apply our hearts unto wisdom!

Watch over us, we implore Thee, with all this household, and all dear to us, during the silence of the night. May our bed comfort us, and our couch ease our complaint. May the peace of God, which passeth understanding, be reflected in our sleep, and even in our dreams. And when, as having awaked out of many a slumber, we at length awake no more, may it be because we have fallen asleep in Jesus, and are for ever with the Lord. *Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

MONDAY.

*Morning.*

**Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer.**

I will wash mine hands in innocency: so will I compass thine altar, O Lord.

The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.

The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.

Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth them all.

Ps. iv. 1.    Ps. xxvi. 6.    Ps xxxiv. 17, 18, 19.

*Evening.*

**The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord: but the prayer of the upright is his delight.**

The Lord is far from the wicked; but he heareth the prayer of the righteous.

I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins they shall be forgiven him.

Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

Prov. xv. 8, 29. 1 Tim. ii. 8. James v. 15, 16.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Lord, Thou hast heard the desire of the humble: thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear.**

Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts, cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications.

And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear

them: I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God.

Ps. x. 17.    Ps. lxxx. 19.    Zech. xii.10.    Zech. xiii. 9.

*Evening.*

**Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.**

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering: for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

Rom. viii. 15.    Eph. vi. 18.    James i. 5, 6, 7.

WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Hear the right, O Lord, attend unto my cry, give ear unto my prayer that goeth not out of feigned lips.**

Thou hast proven mine heart; thou hast visited me in the night; thou hast tried me, and shalt find nothing: I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress.

I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.

Ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.

Ps. xvii. 1, 3.

Jer. xxix. 11, 13.

*Evening.*

**Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens.**

If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands toward him;

Thou shalt forget thy misery, and remember it as waters that pass away:

And thine age shall be clearer than the noon-day; thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning.

And thou shalt be secure, because there is hope; yea, thou shalt dig about thee, and thou shalt take thy rest in safety.

Also thou shalt lie down, and none shall make thee afraid.

Lam. iii. 41.

Job xi. 13, 16, 17, 18. 19.

THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.**

Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant;

Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.

John ix. 31.      Isa. lvi. 6, 7.

*Evening.*

**He forgetteth not the cry of the humble.**

Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the humble: thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear;

To judge the fatherless and the oppressed, that the man of the earth may no more oppress.

This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.

The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants; and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.

Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud; and he shall hear my voice.

Ps. ix. 12.

Ps. x. 17, 18.

Ps. xxxiv. 6, 22.

Ps. lv. 17.

FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.**

The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

I tell you this man went down to his house justified rather than the other.

Luke xviii. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.

*Evening.*

**Bow down thine ear, O Lord, hear me: for I am poor and needy.**

Be merciful unto me, O Lord: for I cry unto thee daily.



Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O Lord,  
do I lift up my soul.

For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and  
plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.

Give ear, O Lord, unto my prayer; and attend to the  
voice of my supplications.

In the day of my trouble I will call upon thee: for thou  
wilt answer me.

Ps. lxxxvi. 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in  
the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will  
look up.**

Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so  
will we render the calves of our lips.

So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our  
hearts unto wisdom.

Hide not thy face from me in the day when I am in  
trouble; incline thine ear unto me: in the day when I call,  
answer me speedily.

O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes!

Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto  
all thy commandments.

Ps. v. 3.    Hos. xiv. 2.    Ps. xc. 12.    Ps. cii. 2.    Ps. cxix. 5, 6.

*Evening.*

**O Lord God of my salvation, I have cried day and night before thee;**

Let my prayer come before thee, incline thine ear unto my cry;

For my soul is full of troubles, and my life draweth nigh unto the grave.

I am counted with them that go down into the pit; I am as a man that hath no strength.

I prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried: I hoped in thy word.

Mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I might meditate in thy word.

Hear my voice, according unto thy loving-kindness; O Lord, quicken me according to thy judgment.

Ps. lxxxviii. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Ps. cxix. 147, 148, 149.

# Home Preacher, or Church in the House.

Eighth Week.

Morning Worship.

O THOU who didst love us when we were enemies, forgive us when we were debtors, recover us when we were dead, relieve us when we were poor, and naked, and wandering, and full of misery, shed abroad Thy love in our hearts, that we may be pitiful and compassionate to our suffering and erring brethren, following the Lord Jesus as our example, obeying His precepts as our rule, and possessing His Spirit as our guide, that so we may finally receive His eternal mercy in the complete salvation of our souls.

HYMN, or *Ps. xxvii. 4, 5.*

NEARER, my God, to Thee,  
Nearer to Thee!  
E'en though it be a cross  
That raiseth me;  
Still all my song shall be,  
Nearer, my God, to Thee  
Nearer to Thee!

Though like a wanderer,  
The sun gone down,  
Darkness comes over me,  
My rest a stone;  
Yet in my dreams I'd be  
Nearer, my God to Thee,  
Nearer to Thee!

Then, with my waking thoughts  
Bright with Thy praise,  
Out of my stony griefs  
Bethels I'll raise;  
So by my woes to be  
Nearer, my God, to Thee  
Nearer to Thee!

And when on joyful wing  
Cleaving the sky,  
Sun, moon, and stars forgot,  
Upwards I fly,  
Still all my song shall be,  
Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
Nearer to Thee!

## GENESIS XXIV. 1-8.

AND Abraham was old, and well stricken in age; and the Lord had blessed Abraham in all things. 2. And Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house, that ruled over all that he had, Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh; 3. And I will make thee swear by the Lord, the God of heaven, and the God of earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell: 4. But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac. 5. And the servant said unto him, Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me unto this land: must I needs bring thy son again unto the land from whence thou camest? 6. And Abraham said unto him, Beware thou that thou bring not my son thither again. 7. The Lord God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land; and he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence. 8. And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath: only bring not my son thither again.

[The rest of the deeply interesting narrative of the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah, so characteristic of eastern manners and customs, is too long to be inserted here, but immediately follows these verses.]

## GENESIS XXV. 7-11, 19-27.

AND these are the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, an hundred threescore and fifteen years. 8. Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people. 9. And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which is before Mamre; 10. The field which Abraham purchased of the sons of Heth: there was Abraham buried, and Sarah his wife. 11. And it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac; and Isaac dwelt by the well Lahai-roi.

### *Prayer.*

O LORD, our God, we would bow before thee with reverence and godly fear. We would render unto thee the homage of body, soul, and spirit. We would worship thee in the beauty of holiness. Grant us the aid that we require. Impart to us the necessary grace. Induce the dispositions which it becometh us to cherish, and bring us into sacred fellowship with the ordinations of thy own mercy for our access to the throne of grace. Blessed be thy name for

Jesus Christ the righteous, our advocate with the Father. Blessed be thy name for the Holy Ghost, the helper of our infirmities in prayer. Blessed be thy name for thy willingness to do for us even exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. We will rejoice because thou waitest to be gracious. Thy former loving-kindnesses are waiting to be renewed. Lord, we believe it: help thou our unbelief. We enquire of thee, according to thy will. We ask that we may receive. We plead with thee, and put in remembrance, that we and others may be blessed. Let all who assemble themselves together on this holy day be remembered by thee, in order to their growth in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. In their exercises of devotion and of instruction may they be strengthened with might by the Spirit in the inner man. Send them help from the sanctuary, and bless them out of Zion. Clothe every minister with salvation, and cause all thy people to shout aloud for joy. And, O Lord God, who art merciful and gracious, have mercy upon the multitudes who obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Bear yet further with their ungodliness. Compassionate their folly. Enlighten their ignorance. Counteract their prejudices. Deal gently with their difficulties. Subdue and subordinate their will to thine; so that, made willing in the day of thy power, they may exercise repentance towards God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. This day may salvation come to their houses,

and to themselves. May every work of Sabbath-day benevolence enjoy thy smile and obtain thy cooperation. Let thy kingdom come, and thy will be done in earth, even as it is done in heaven. And where, O heavenly Father, thy children are prevented by affliction from the assembling themselves together, be pleased to alleviate their affliction kindly. Speak comfortably unto them. Lay not more upon them than they are able to bear. Stay thy rough wind in the day of thine east wind. Make all their beds in their sickness. Give them the assurance and the pledge that thou art chastening them for their profit, that they may be partakers of thy holiness. In the multitude of their thoughts within them, may thy comforts delight their souls. Upon ourselves, gracious Lord, command a blessing. In this household may we know that the sabbath was made for man. In resting from the labours of the life that now is, may we all be led to the practical consideration of the life that is to come. May our hours which we spend at home be spent in personal fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. May our hours which we spend in the sanctuary be spent in the communion of saints, and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost. Deliver us from all indolence and from all indifference, and from all formalism and from all self-sufficiency, and from all dependence on the arm of flesh. Give us to remember, whilst we are gratefully enjoying the means of grace that our sufficiency is of God



alone. We beseech thee to bless our Queen and our country. Through the various services of this day, may pure and undefiled religion be increased in our land, and our neighbours be brought to love one another as they love themselves. Hasten the time, O Lord, when at home and abroad there shall be the universal prevalence of the godliness which is profitable for all things, and which hath the promise both of the life that now is, and of the life that is to come. Forgive us once more our manifold offences. We confess them. We deplore them. We renounce them. Have mercy upon us through our great High Priest; and where our sins have abounded may thy grace and much more abound. And now, unto the Father, unto the son, and unto the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, even for ever and ever. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

INCLINE our hearts, O Lord, to calm and Christ-like contemplation. Cause us to approach unto thee, and then show unto us thy covenant. Bring us into thy banqueting house, and let thy banner over us be love. Deal bountifully

with thy servants according to thy word, that of the peace which is like a river we may personally participate, even of the very peace which passeth understanding -- peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

HYMN, or *Psalm lxii.* 5-8.

THROUGH all the changing scenes of life,  
In trouble and in joy,  
The praises of my God shall still  
My heart and tongue employ.

Of his deliver'rance I will boast,  
Till all who are distress'd  
From my example comfort take,  
And charm their griefs to rest.

The host of God encamp around  
The dwellings of the just;  
Protection He affords to all  
Who make his name their trust.

O! make but trial of his love;  
Experience will decide  
How blest they are, and only they,

Who in his truth confide.  
Fear Him, ye saints and you will then  
Have nothing else to fear;  
Make *you* his service your delight,  
Your wants He'll make his care.

### LUKE XII. 15-32.

And he said unto them, take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. 16. And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: 17. And he thought within himself, saying what shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? 18. And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. 19. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much good laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. 20. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? 21. So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God. 22. And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for

your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. 24. Consider the ravens: for they neither sow, nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them. How much more are ye better than the fowls? 25. And which of you, with taking thought, can add to his stature one cubit? 16. If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest? 27. Consider the lilies, how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these. 28. If then God so clothe the grass, which is to-day in the field, and to-morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith? 29. And seek ye not what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. 30. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. 31. But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. 32. Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

### HEBREWS XIII. 5, 6.

Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will

never leave thee, nor forsake thee. 6. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

-----

## SERMON VIII.

“TAKE THEREFORE NO THOUGHT FOR THE MORROW: FOR THE MORROW SHALL TAKE THOUGHT FOR THE THINGS OF ITSELF.”

-- Matt. vi. 34.

WEAK faith may be genuine faith. A man may be a feeble and a faltering believer; but he may be a real believer. Confidence in God may lack consistency and steadfastness and force: it may, nevertheless, be confidence of the right kind.

A consolatory assurance this for some of us who belong to Christ. We rejoice, as we infer from the history of the first disciples, that, our timidity and trepidation notwithstanding, we may deem ourselves the children of God.

With our timidity and trepidation, however, we ought never to be content. By their exercise our Saviour is

dishonoured. By their exercise, moreover, he is sore displeased. It is not a right thing, but a wrong thing, to question the divine promises. It is a habit, not for admiration, but for reproof, the habit of mistrusting the divine word. Christians we may be, no doubt, while slow of heart to believe: but we are Christians in that case, we must remember, of whom Christ utters deplorable complaints. Although he bears with us generously, he declares himself aggrieved.

Witness the whole passage of which this exhortation is a part. Christ was dealing with his disciples pitifully. They were evidently the objects of his compassionate and considerate regard. *Albeit*, he is constrained to administer significant rebuke. They were apprehensive: why were they apprehensive? They were dismayed: why were they dismayed? They were in bondage to the fear which hath torment: why were they in bondage to it, even for an hour? With instructions such as they had been receiving, they ought to have known better. Let them hearken to the instruction once more: and then, let the instruction do its blessed work of tranquillity and peace. "Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself."

Of the same habit with these first disciples -- as, to our discredit, alas! we are -- let us listen as they were listening, that we may learn.

IN THE FIRST PLACE, LET THE LESSON OF OUR SAVIOUR BE ASCERTAINED. Christian men are to take no thought. You ask for an explanation, and you press for an explanation. It occurs to you that we are exhorted to “provide things honest in the sight of all men;” that we are required to take care, each of us severally, of his own house. Holy Scripture, as you remember, looks complacently on the boy at school amidst his solicitude; on the virtuous woman amidst her solicitude; on the professional man, on the mercantile man, on the literary man, on the working man, amidst his solicitude; on the faithful minister of Jesus Christ amidst of his solicitude. The highest authority of all may be quoted for earnest and continuous and profound thought, in respect to the relationships and the occupations of our daily life. Worse than an infidel is that man declared to be, who does not forecast and prearrange for the household which has been committed to his care.

How then is our Lord to be understood when he bids us to dispense with all thought -- when he deprecates all solicitude about to-morrow -- if, indeed, he does not deprecate, besides, all solicitude about to-day?

The fact is, that he does not deprecate *all* solicitude: that he does not forbid *all* thought. What he does is to prohibit a certain kind of solicitude and thought. His object is to guard us against the idea that every thing is within our own power -- that we are answerable for every thing -- that

we must see to the outworking of all processes and to the accomplishment of all results. Incessant uneasiness, morbid apprehensiveness, perpetual interference, irrepressible misgiving, obtrusive meddlesomeness with the future, are things which are proscribed: things all of them which leave out of sight the presence and the providence of God.

Know you not, brethren, what it is to become incessantly uneasy, morbidly apprehensive, perpetually interfering, irrepressibly tremulous, obtrusively meddlesome with the future: anticipating and fore-appointing and preparing, in practical unmindfulness of God, both for that which is near at hand, and for that which is further off?

Yes, you know; and you confess that you know it all. It is too often as if every thing about yourselves and others with whom you have to do, were left ultimately in your own hands: as if, should your wisdom and your vigilance and your capabilities fail, disaster and ruin must of course ensue. What shall you eat? What shall you drink? Wherewithal shall you be clothed?

You must find out *how* necessities are to be provided for, and *how* emergencies are to be met. To you it appertains to devise, and to you it also appertains to execute the best possible, the best imaginable plans: plans for the transactions of your business, plans for the settlement of your children, plans for the well-being of the commonwealth, plans for the improvement of humanity,



plans for your own selves in particular, as you are nearing step after step your latter end.

To devise such plans, however, involves you in sad embarrassment. In the attempted execution of your plans you are counteracted and defied. Vexation is a necessary consequence. Irritability is presently induced. You find yourselves the miserable victims of mortification and chagrin. To fight with the vexation is to make it worse. To be annoyed at the irritability is to aggravate the irritation. To conceal the mortification and chagrin is desolation: to evince them is disgrace.

It is this kind of thoughtfulness which our Saviour has forbidden: the thoughtfulness which makes a man his own lawgiver, his own guardian, his own guide. “Have none of it,” is the Lord’s command. Have none of it, in respect to the time that now is. Have none of it, in respect to the time that is to come. Be prudent, by all means. Be watchful, by all means. Be diligent, by all means. Be patient, by all means. Leave nothing whatever undone which a devout sagacity deemeth to be expedient. Leave nothing unattempted which looketh like an opening in the providence of God. Of every suggestion that may come down from heaven be receptive. To every direction that may come down from heaven be responsive. For every ministry that may come down from heaven be expectant. With all and every thing that has been sent down from

heaven in regard to you be in fellowship: and then, then leave the rest with God. 'Tis yours to obey: 'tis his to provide.

That surrounding circumstances are calamitous may be true: that approaching circumstances threaten to be calamitous may also be true. If you survive the adversities of to-day there may come the adversities of to-morrow. To escape from one sorrow may be to get immersed in another sorrow. Though there may be sunshine for the passing hour, the sunshine may be overclouded and swallowed up in gloom.

All this is granted without the slightest reservation; and then the lesson of our Saviour is -- take things as they occur. Live for the time being, according to the characteristics of the time being. Make the best of your existing condition. Rest and repose yourselves; and rest and repose yourselves now in the Lord your God. *But*, that occasion of sorrow which is impending! Never mind that, as though you must personally avert it; as though you must personally counterwork it; as though you must personally turn it to some good account; the alternative being, that the sorrow will be an unmitigated evil; that there will be no alleviation nor relief.

Brethren, there is another alternative than that. Say that the sorrow happens -- although it may not happen after all. Many a cloud has threatened which has quietly

dispersed. But let the sorrow come, if it must be so, and with it there will come, besides, the presence of him who comforteth those who are cast down: the sympathy of him who knoweth how to speak a word in season to them who are weary: the succour of him whose strength is made perfect in our weakness: the generous, loving, fatherly, all-sufficient interposition of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

Your own carefulness! Have done with it. Your own forecasting! Discard it. Your own wisdom! Let it be unmentioned. Your own plans, your own provisions, your own preparation! Mistrust them at their best estate; and, mistrusting them, subordinate them all to the sovereignty which hath made with you an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure. Take no thought for the morrow, for the morrow will take thought for the things of itself. So your day, so shall your strength be.

THE SAVIOUR'S LESSON, HAVING THUS BEEN ASCERTAINED, LET IT, IN THE SECOND PLACE, BE JUSTIFIED AND ENFORCED. The word "therefore" at the commencement of our text is a notable and instructive word. It indicates, indeed, the reasons why you are not to become engrossed with self-sufficient activity: why, moreover, you are not to become enshrouded in self-consuming gloom. To any charge of folly and fanaticism there is the amplest answer, and the answer is immediately at hand.

You are to be contented, not uneasy: hopeful, not despondent: cheerful, not sad. Why? *Expediency suggests that you should be so.* That is the answer first. Thus the teaching runs: “Which of you, by taking thought, can add one cubit unto his stature?” or, to adopt a better translation -- “one cubit unto his lifetime?”

Assuming now any amount of restlessness under existing circumstances: any measure of vehemence in corresponding action: any quantity of force in the operations of the will: to what does the whole of it conduce? We have known men who have said that they would have, at any hazard and at any cost, their own way. “Not do it!” We are mistaken in our men. They will do it, as we shall see. “Not avoid it!” Have we never heard of them before? Upon the avoidance they are determined; and one way or another the determination shall be triumphantly be carried out.

Presumption, we know, can attempt a great deal: presumption can even effect a great deal. But take it at its proudest, and its strongest, and its wisest, can it prolong life for a single hour? The simple interrogation is enough. The matter rests supremely with God. If it pleaseth him, we live: if it pleaseth him, we die. Hear the Lord’s own challenge to the presumptuous -- “See now that I, even I am here, and there is no God with me. I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand.” Fretfulness, therefore, is unavailing;

rebelliousness is useless; resistance takes no effect. Not in one department only of his government, but in every department, whatsoever God purposeth, he accomplisheth: whatsoever God desireth, he brings to pass. The counsel of the Lord, that must stand.

Obviously, our business is to acquiesce: cheerfully and complacently to acquiesce. We should take nothing by our resentfulness. We should find no benefit in opposition. After the stoutest maintenance of what might haughtily be denominated independent action and independent thought, we should have unresistingly to submit.

Submit consequently without any pretension to independence. Fall in with the divine purposes, as with congenial and gracious purposes. Consent to a government of your affairs, and to a guidance of your steps, over which you have no ultimate control. Find your blessedness in your necessity: and to the sublime oracle of inspiration -- "Of him are all things, and through him are all things, and to him are all things" -- say outloud, Amen: even so, Father, not my will, but thine, be done.

You are to be contented, not uneasy: hopeful, not despondent: cheerful, not sad. Why? *Intelligence expects that you should be so.* That is the answer secondly. Thus the teaching runs: "Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them." Thus in continuance the

teaching runs: “Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; thy toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you that Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these.”

Giving heed to this teaching, you remember what Solomon was, as the queen of Sheba looked upon him with her irrepressible and admiring awe. Persia and Egypt and Damascus and Dedan and Tarshish had supplied artificers and material: and thus he was right gorgeously and magnificently arrayed. His gorgeous and magnificent array, however, paled and sank into the shade before the lily. One flower was enough. Against all the glory, its exquisiteness prevailed.

You admit the fact, and you admit, of course, that the clothing of the lily is to be ascribed to God. What does intelligence expect from the admission? This, and nothing less -- “I will confide in God. I will refer all my solicitude to God. I will assure myself of the watchfulness and the loving-kindness of the providence of God. The flowers of the field are of temporary duration: nevertheless, they are cared for by the Almighty. I am to live for ever, wherefore I shall not be uncared for. They are destined for the oven: yet God ordains and works for the splendour of their colours and the symmetry of their forms. I am destined for immortality, wherefore God will ordain and work for me whatever I may need. According to their nature the lilies

commit themselves to him: according to my nature I will commit myself to him as well. They leave to-morrow to itself: to itself I will leave it, too. I am of more importance than a lily, and according to my importance our heavenly Father will provide. So much the more shall I partake the communications of his love.”

Still giving heed to the Saviour’s teaching, you remember the superabundance of the supply for the fowls of the air. Immediately do you acknowledge that they have enough and to spare. Without hesitation you acknowledge that they receive their meat from God. What does intelligence expect from the acknowledgment? This, and nothing less -- “I will relinquish my apprehensiveness. I will cease from my trepidation. I will discourage my impatience. I will keep my tendency to intermeddle with the future under some goodly measure of restraint. I will trust and not be so querulously and so mistrustfully afraid. The fowls are not what I am in the scale of being. What is a sparrow to a man, to a man made in the image of God, to a man capable of enjoying God, to a man who is called to be an imitator of God? What is a raven to a ransomed and a regenerated man, who has been reconciled to God, adopted by God, assimilated with God: his iniquities all forgiven, his body the temple of the Holy Ghost: his title and his meetness inalienable to the inheritance of the saints in light?” The comparison startles and half discomforts you. What

comparison can there be between a sparrow, whose value is to be estimated at the fraction of a farthing, and yourself, whose value is to be estimated by the precious blood of Christ! Exactly: you are demonstrably much better than all the sparrows. But you are, therefore, bound not to murmur, but to agree: not to be self-willed but self-submissive: not to tremble, but to trust. God's government of the inferior things is an index of his government of your own self. He has constituted every fowl and every flower a monitor to you: and the message of the monitor is the echo of his own word, "Be not afraid, only believe." He cannot protect them, and neglect you. He cannot supply them, and abandon you. He cannot remember them, and forget you. By as much as the new creature in Christ Jesus transcends the beasts that perish, by just so much are you guaranteed of all things whatever which are essential both to the life that now is and to the life that is to come. Expedience and intelligence combine to justify and to enforce the lesson of the text.

You are to be contented, not uneasy: hopeful, not despondent: cheerful, not sad. Why? *Consistency requires that you should be so.* This is the answer lastly. Thus runs the teaching: "After all these do the Gentiles seek: but your heavenly Father knoweth that you have need of all these things." Heathen men, whose gods are recognized by themselves as being local in their influence, changeable in



their purposes, and limited in their resources, may properly give way to perturbation. No wonder at all if they alternate unhappily between presumption and despair. They may well seek, and seek; now in one direction, and then in another; now at some irrational impulse within, and then, at some unauthorized indication without: daring enough to-day to attempt anything; abject enough to-morrow to lick the dust; desolate enough withal to lie down and die. Their religion accounts for every thing. No man being better than his gods, they are desperate or they are cowardly of course.

What have you, by contrast, to say of your God? Is he local in his influence? “Withdraw the interrogation,” is your rejoinder; “for he doeth his pleasure in the armies of heaven and amongst the inhabitants of the earth: Is he changeful in his purposes? “Never repeat the inquiry,” is your reproof; “for he cannot deny himself; it is impossible that he should lie.” Is he limited in his resources? “Shame upon the question,” is your reply: “for he speaks, and it is done; he commandeth, and it stands fast. None can stay his hand or say to him, What doest thou? He is and he was and he is to come -- the Almighty and the Sovereign Lord.”

And so you go on: and most rightly and warrantably you go on, until you have set before us one whom of necessity we must reverently and gratefully adore. It is so that there is no compassion like unto his compassion. It is so that there is no wisdom like unto his wisdom. It is so

that there is no faithfulness like unto his faithfulness. It is so that there is no mercy like unto his mercy. How much the exceeding great and precious promises express! How much the appointment and mission of the only begotten Son express? How much the offices and operations of the Holy Ghost express! How much fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore express! There is no God like unto your God! The worshipper of Jupiter might legitimately tremble: the worshipper of Jehovah may legitimately rejoice.

All unanswerable is your case: but then, having such a case, you have nothing left but the obligation to submit, to consent, to confide, to hope, to expect. In proportion to your persuasion of the greatness and the goodness and the grace of your heavenly Father, you are committed to resign yourselves to his hands, to sympathize with his arrangements, to comply with his commandments, to assure yourselves of his interposition, to repose serenely in his love. Heathen men may take thought. Christian men should do no such thing. Expediency suggests: intelligence expects: consistency requires -- that you act as the text directs.

“Be careful then for nothing: but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” -- William Brock, D.D.

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

### OF TWO BROTHERS CALLED SONS OF THUNDER.

IF you look at a map of Palestine, and trace the course of the river Jordan, you will find that it falls into one lake, and flows through another. The first is the Dead Sea. The other is the Sea of Tiberias, or of Galilee. This has also other names. It is called the Sea of Chinnereth in the Old Testament, and the Lake of Gennesareth in the New. It is not very large, but travellers tell us it is very pretty. The Jordan runs into it at the north end, and flows out of it quite at the south. Some say its course can be traced all through the lake. On the east and west sides are picturesque hills, down the hollows of which streamlets pour. Very often, too, sudden squalls blow from these heights and lash the sea into stormy billows. The waters of the lake are clear and sweet, and are stored with different kinds of fish. The country round about is now very desolate, but long ago there were a number of thriving little towns on the different shores.

To one of those towns the brothers I am now to tell you about belonged. They were fishermen by occupation. Their father, whose name was Zebedee, was a fisher, and had brought up his boys to help him in his craft. I do not know anything about their childhood or their childish days. But

after they were men they used to go out on to the lake with their father, and cast in their nets to catch fish. It was an exposed, hardy sort of life they were obliged to live, attended with dangers, and needing much watchfulness, patience and skill. But they have little dreamed that before long they would have to enter on an employment which would expose them to worse dangers, and require far greater toils. Let me tell you how this came about.

At the time when these two brothers had grown up to help their father in his work, there was a great excitement through all the land of Judea. A very bold and strange preacher had appeared, and the whole country was ringing with his fame. Everybody was talking about the man that had come up from the desert, clothed with rough camlet, calling on men to repent, and prepare for the coming of the King. Everybody that could go, went to hear him. And so powerful was his preaching, that crowds were led to confess their sins and receive baptism at his hands, as a sign that they were turning from their sins, and waiting for the Christ, who, the preacher said, was at hand. Even the people in Galilee had heard of this singular man, and when they were south at the feasts in Jerusalem, had flocked to see him. Many of them believed his message, and were ready to receive the Messiah when he should appear. Zebedee and his sons were of the number. They became disciples of this great preacher, whose name was John. One

of the brothers had the same name. Now, one day a thing happened to him that gave him great thought. He was in Judea at the time. He had been spending some days learning from his master, the great preacher spoken of. In the forenoon of one of them he was standing beside him, along with another disciple, who was also from Galilee, when John the Baptist, as he was called, lifted his hand, and pointing towards a man who was walking at some distance, said, "Behold the lamb of God!" On hearing his, the two followers went after the person pointed out to them, and on his inviting them to do so, they accompanied him to his lodgings, and spent the day with him. It was a great day for them; for they were convinced fully that this person, who was no other than Jesus of Nazareth, was indeed the Sent of God. They said so to others, and when they came back to Galilee, and went to their work again, they often talked about the man they had found, the person of whom their Bibles had told them that he should appear to save his people. They hoped he would soon show himself to all the nation as the great Messiah promised to their fathers.

In this state of mind John the son of Zebedee, along with his brother James, and their father, were sitting in their little fishing smack, mending their nets, that had got torn with the work of the night before. The other disciple that had spent a day with Jesus, along with John, was at a little distance with a brother of his, throwing their net into

the sea. As they were doing so, Jesus came along the shore, and called them to come after him, and they left their nets and went at once. He told them he wanted to teach them how to fish men. Then James and John saw him coming towards their ship, and when he had come up to the place, he called out to them also to follow him. At once they left their father in the ship, and followed Jesus. Their father made no objection. If he lived for a number of years after, he must have been very glad that he did not oppose or complain. He lent his sons to the Lord, and they became preachers of the gospel, and their names are now held in loving esteem in all the churches. Every person knows now about James, and John his brother.

I cannot tell you all that happened to them after they became followers of Jesus. I cannot tell you particularly how he chose them to be with him on several occasions, when there was only one other apostle allowed to be present. But I must mention one thing, which showed their quick disposition. Jesus and his disciples were once travelling from Galilee to Jerusalem, and were passing through a part of Samaria. They were coming near to a village, and wished to rest there. But when some of the disciples went forward to ask for lodgings, the people would not take them in. James and John were very angry at this, and asked Jesus if he would allow them to bring fire from heaven and burn the villages up. Jesus reproved them, and

told them they did not know what spirit they were of. Some have thought that he called them Boanerges, “sons of thunder,” on this occasion, as if to say, You are like lightning, and to keep them in mind of their rashness in wishing fire from heaven. But the name was rather to show that Jesus would use their quick, fervid spirit to do great work for him when they should come to preach the gospel.

They did perform great work for Jesus. One of them, James, was the first of the apostles that died for his Lord. The other, whom Jesus very much love, lived to be an old man, and was known as the apostle that was always preaching about love. He did not ask for fire afterwards to destroy men, but to melt and win them. He was chosen to see great visions, and to write a deep, sweet life of Jesus. There was a curious story which went about him for a while. It was thought that he should not die, from something Christ said about him. But he only lived to a great age, and fell asleep. They say that his last public word, spoken from a litter on which they carried him into the church, was, “Little children, love one another.”

-----

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Where is the Lake of Tiberias called the Sea of Chinnereth?
2. What examples have we in scripture of sudden storms on the Sea of Galilee?
3. Can you name three towns that stood on the west side of the Sea of Tiberias?
4. What was the name of the mother of James and John?
5. Who was the disciple that, along with John, heard the Baptist say, “Behold the Lamb of God?”
6. Who were the two brothers that were casting their nets into the sea when Jesus called them?
7. Where are we told that Jesus called James and John, Boanerges, and also what the word meant?
8. What other famous surname did Jesus give to one of his disciples?
9. Who put James, the brother of John, to death?
10. What was the saying of Christ which led to the idea that John was not to die?
11. How many books of Scripture have been written by Boanerges?

By consulting the passages here noted, answers to the foregoing questions will be easily found. Josh. xiii. (Matt. ix., John vi.); Matt. xiv. (Matt. xxvii., Mark xv.); John i.; Matt. iv.; Mark iii. (John i., Mark iii.); Acts xii.; John xxi. (John’s Gospel, Epistles, and Revelation).



-----

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE LESSONS.

1. From among what people was Abraham anxious to obtain a wife for his son Isaac? Gen. xxiv. 3, 4.
2. Where and by whom was Abraham buried? Gen. xxv. 9, 10.
3. What were the names of the sons of Isaac? Gen. xxv. 27.
4. Whose birth is recorded in the passage read from the gospel of St. Luke?
5. What were the names of John the Baptist's parents, and their character?
6. Narrate the circumstances attending the birth of John.

-----

### *Prayer.*

O THOU who didst by the Sea of Galilee call on fishermen busy at their work to follow Thee, and didst by Thy word draw them after Thee, to make them apostles of thy gospel,

wilt Thou call us also to the work Thou wilt us to do?  
Give us grace in our places, however humble, to follow  
Thee; to go after Thee, through duty and through trial, till  
Thou bring us home. Do not allow us to turn aside from  
Thy paths. Make us to go in Thy steps, imitating Thy holy  
example. Even as sheep go after the shepherd, may we  
follow Thee. And when we come to the dark valley of the  
shadow of death, through which, when it was very dark,  
Thou didst go, may we see Thee still going before us, and  
find that Thy rod and Thy staff are our guardian and our  
comfort. To Thee be glory, world without end. *Amen.*

-----

## EVENING WORSHIP.

FATHER of Peace; vouchsafe in Thy great love so to  
strengthen our trust in Thee, that peace and holiness may  
for ever adorn, support, and enrich us as a family. May Thy  
peace reign also in every church, that with one heart, mind,  
and voice, they may evermore praise Thy name. May the  
Gospel of Peace be advanced, so that the Prince of Peace  
may be known and obeyed, and his name magnified  
throughout all the earth. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm cxxi.*

NOW it belongs not to my care  
Whether I die or live;  
To love and serve Thee is my share  
And this Thy grace must give.

Come, Lord, when grace hath made me meet  
Thy blessed face to see;  
For if Thy work on earth be sweet,  
What will Thy glory be?

Then I shall end my sad complaints,  
And weary sinful days,  
And join with the triumphant saints  
That sing Jehovah's praise.

My knowledge of that life is small;  
The eye of faith is dim;  
But it's enough that Christ knows all,  
And I shall be with Him.

## LUKE I. 1-25.

FORASMUCH as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, 2. Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eye-witnesses, and ministers of the word: 3. It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, 4. That thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed. 5. There was, in the days of Herod the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth. 6. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. 7. And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren; and they both were now well stricken in years. 8. And it came to pass, that, while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, 9. According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. 10. And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the

time of incense. 11. And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. 12. And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. 13. But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias,; for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. 14. And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. 15. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. 16. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. 17. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord, &c.

---

*Prayer.*

O LORD, our heavenly Father, we are gathered at Thy footstool amidst great mercy. As Thy holy day has passed over us, it has scattered blessing after blessing upon our neighbours and upon ourselves. We have tasted and seen

that the Lord is good. We have drawn water out of the wells of salvation. We have set our seal unto thine adorable faithfulness, and we know in ourselves to-night that it is not a vain thing to draw near unto the Lord. Thou hast done great things for us, whereof we are very glad. Accept our thanksgiving, for unto thee assuredly it belongs. Thou makest us to differ whereinsoever to our advantage and our comfort we do differ from our fellow men. Neither in our condition, nor our character -- neither in possession, nor in reversion -- have we anything we have not received. By thy grace we are what we are, and where we are. Work within us to will and to do of thy good pleasure, that we may live, not unto ourselves, but unto thee. Cause our thankfulness to be fruitful of good works. Throughout all this week may it be apparent unto all with whom we have to do, that we are indeed a living sacrifice to God. Out of a good conversation may we make it evident, that we have truly sanctified and kept holy this Sabbath day. Send down, we beseech thee, blessing upon the preaching of thy word, wherever in simplicity and godly sincerity it has been made known. Guard it against the baneful influences of superstition, self-righteousness, of worldly-mindedness, of procrastination, and of sheer indifference. Deepen and perpetuate all sound evangelical impressions. May the one thing needful take hold, and keep hold, of human understandings and of human hearts. Repel the wicked one

in his attempt to catch away that which has been sown. Let the day which declares all things declare that no Christian labour has been in vain: that no good man's strength has been spent for naught. Save now, O Lord, we beseech thee: O Lord, send prosperity. As thy faithful servants are reviewing that which they have wrought, make them to rejoice that the excellency of the power is of God, and not of themselves. We bear upon our hearts, merciful Father, thy sorrowing and troubled ones. Vouchsafe unto them thy stronger consolations. Empower them to rejoice in their tribulations. Fill their hearts full of the persuasion that their light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for them a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory. God of patience! hear our cry on their behalf, that patience may have its perfect work. Throughout the coming night may their weariness be relieved, and their sleeplessness be cheered, by the precious ministries of thy new covenant love. Give this family some Sabbath evening token for good. Deal bountifully with the younger ones and the older ones together. Unite us all by a living faith unto Christ. Give us light and strength and grace for the several relationships which we sustain. May residence here conduce to residence in heaven. When thou makest up thy jewels at the last great day, grant, O Lord our God, that every one bowing before thee now be recognized as a jewel. God forbid that either of us should be found then amongst

the reprobate silver, to be cast away. O Lord, hear. O Lord, forgive. O Lord, hearken and do, for the sake of thine only Son our Saviour, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

*Morning.*

**Better is little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and trouble therewith.**

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.

Prov. xv. 16.    Col. iii. 1,2,3.    John vi. 27.



*Evening.*

**For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Chist, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.**

Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?

Be careful for nothing: but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.

And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

2 Cor. viii. 9. James ii. 5. Phil. iv. 6, 7.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Ye shall serve the Lord your God, and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee.**

He hath given meat unto them that fear him: he will ever be mindful of his covenant.

Remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me:

Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? Or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.

Exod. xxiii. 25. Ps. cxi. 5. Matt. iv. 4. Prov. xxx. 8, 9.

*Evening.*

**For whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.**

My kingdom is not of this world.

Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are yet not much better than they?

1 John v. 4. John xviii. 36. Matt. vi. 25, 26.

## WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.**

Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron;

Because they rebelled against the words of God, and  
contemned the counsel of the most High:

Therefore he brought down their heart with labour:  
they fell down, and there was none to help.

Then they cried unto the Lord in the trouble, and he  
saved them out of their distresses.

He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of  
death, and brake their bands in sunder.

Ps. cvii. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.

*Evening.*

**The Lord knoweth the days of the upright: and their  
inheritance shall be forever.**

Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall  
fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and  
the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from  
the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls:

Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of  
my salvation.

The Lord God is my strength, and he will make my feet  
like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high  
places.

Ps. xxxvii. 18.      Hab. iii. 17, 18, 19.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**Exercise thyself unto godliness.**

For bodily exercise profiteth little; but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward.

But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life.

1 Tim. iv. 7,8.

2 Cor. i. 12.

1 Tim. vi. 11, 12.

*Evening.*

**The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations.**

Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches.

As a dream when one awaketh: so, O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image.

Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger.

Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

2 Pet. ii. 9      Ps. lxxiii. 12, 20.      Zeph. ii. 3.      Rom. vi. 13.

## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**There came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?**

And Jesus said unto him Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God.

Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother.

And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth.

Then Jesus, beholding him, loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me.

Mark x. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21.

*Evening.*

**And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!**

And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!

It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, who then can be saved?

And Jesus, looking upon them, saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.

Mark x. 23, 24, 25, 26, 27.

## **SATURDAY.**

*Morning.*

**The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion.**

The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous hath hope in his death.

The light of the righteous rejoiceth: but the lamp of the wicked shall be put out.

For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.

Prov. xxviii. 1.      Prov. xiv. 32.      Prov. xiii. 9.      Ps. lxxxiv. 11, 12.

*Evening.*

**The upright shall have good things in possession.**

Whoso walketh uprightly shall be saved: but he that is perverse in his ways shall fall at once.

A faithful man shall abound with blessings.

The Lord knoweth the days of the upright; and their inheritance shall be for ever.

Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Prov. xxviii. 10, 18, 20.      Ps. xxxvii. 18.      Matt. xiii. 43.

# Home Preacher, or Church in the House.

Ninth Week.

## MORNING WORSHIP.

Gracious Father, increase and maintain in us that faith which is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. In the exercise of it may we now come to Thee, believing that Thou art, and that Thou art a rewarder of them that diligently seek Thee; and give us to experience that they who seek the Lord shall not want any good. Hear us for Jesus' sake. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm iv. 3-8.*

COME Saviour, Jesus, from above!  
Assist me with thy heavenly grace;  
Empty my heart of earthly love,  
And for thyself prepare the place.

While in this region here below,  
No other good will I pursue;  
I'll bid this world of noise and show,  
With all its glittering snares, adieu!



Henceforth may no profane delight  
Divide this consecrated soul;  
Possess it thou, who hast the right,  
As Lord and Master of the whole.

Wealth, honour, pleasure, and what else  
This short-enduring world can give,  
Tempt as ye will my soul repels  
To Christ alone resolved to live.

#### ACTS V. 1-16.

**BUT** a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, 2. And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet. 3. But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? 4. Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this in thine heart? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. 5. And Ananias, hearing these words, fell down, and gave up

the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things. 6. And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him. 7. And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in. 8. And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much. And she said, Yea, for so much. 9. Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out. 10. Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and carrying her forth, buried her by her husband. 11. And great fear came upon all the church, and as many as heard these things. 12. And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch. 13. And of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them. 14. And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women;) 15. Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. 16. There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them

which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.

-----

*Prayer.*

O THOU Holy One, Ancient of Days, God of our fathers, God of our children, God of the first man, God of the eternity that is past, of the moment that is now flitting, of the eternity to come -- we, the children of time, adore Thee that it is permitted us to draw near to Thee, and that we are not only allowed, but invited to come, and out of the depths of our unworthiness to cry, Our Father. In the name of thy Son Jesus, we seek thy pardon for every misspent moment, every misused faculty, every opportunity neglected, every act of waywardness, in this our brief but pregnant life. We seek thy pardon for every stain, every unholy and unsanctified thought, which has this day defiled our souls. Thou knowest where the world is, in the place that ought to belong to God alone. May the light of thine eye, piercing earthly mists, set all the objects within our souls before the view of our own conscience. May that which is vile seem vile, that which is corrupt seem corrupt; and may all things appear to us, not in our point of view, but as thou dost see

them. And O grant that now we may fall before Thee self-aborring, each knowing his own sin and feeling it, and repenting of it; each penerated with the conviction that unless saved by the power of Christ he must perish. Father of mercies, give us grace that we may know whether our hearts are thine or held from Thee. May thine own light shine upon every soul here present, and may the things of sense be kept under by the revelations of thy Holy Spirit. Open our internal eye, and let us feel the things that are spiritually discerned. Reveal them, manifest them, make them known by thine evidence; give them substance, give them reality, give them command and power over mind and heart, so that none of us may remain indifferent, but that all, strengthened with the Spirit's might in the inner man, may resolve to serve Thee better than ever. If any have hitherto been halting between two opinions, may they now be induced to cast the die, and commit their souls in covenant to God. If any have never yet seriously looked at the question of their souls' salvation, O that to-day, O that this moment, they may be brought to Thee. Thou -- to whom one day is as a thousand years, Thou canst in this passing moment work all the work of a saving change upon any heart here. Bow down the heavens, and let thy glory appear, and bless us throughout the rest of this day, and keep us unto eternal life.

And O Thou Mediator between God and man, look upon us, and send thy Spirit to plead in us, and strive with us, and breathe through us; and let the services of this sacred day be marked with extraordinary power from on high. Touch the heart of hearers, touch that of preachers. May the word come from the heart and go to the heart! may it be manifestly sent by Thee -- not the word of man, but in truth the word of God! Let the truths taught be according to thine oracles, and sent by the power of thy Spirit. Bless all congregations, all preachers, all hearers, and all Christian families. May thy work throughout the world prosper day by day, week by week, with constant growth and blessed increase, so that great may be the praise of the Lord, and great the joy of the people, for the sake of Christ our Redeemer. Our Father, &c. *Amen.*

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

WE beseech of Thee, our heavenly Father, who hath sent thine eternal Son into the world to save us from ignorance, guilt, and sin, so to enlighten our minds and strengthen our faith that we may be truly taught Thy will by Jesus Christ our prophet; receive the pardon of our sins and have our persons and services accepted through Him,

our only priest and intercessor; and have our souls renewed and wholly governed by Him our king; so that we may reign with Him as priests and kings for ever. *Amen.*

HYMN, or *Psalm lxx. 4-5.*

To him that in thy name believes,  
Eternal life with thee is given;  
Into himself he all receives,  
Pardon, and holiness, and heaven.

The things unknown to feeble sense,  
Unseen by reason's glimmering ray,  
With strong, commanding evidence,  
Their heavenly origin display.

Faith lends its realizing light,  
The clouds disperse, the shadows fly;  
The Invisible appears in sight,  
And God is seen by mortal eye.

## HEBREWS XI. 23-40.

BY faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment. 24. By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; 25. Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; 26. Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. 27. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. 28. Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the first-born should touch them. 29. By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land; which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned. 30. By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days. 31. By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace. 32. And what shall I say more? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of

the prophets: 33. Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, 34. Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. 35. Women received back their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: 36. And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment: 37. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goat skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; 38. (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. 39. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: 40. God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

#### MARK XI. 21-23.

AND Peter, calling to remembrance, saith unto him, Master, behold, the fig-tree which thou cursedest is withered away. 22. And Jesus answering saith unto them,



Have faith in God. 23. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain Be thou removed, and be thou cast unto the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.

-----

## SERMON IX.

“BY FAITH MOSES, WHEN HE WAS COME TO YEARS, REFUSED TO BE CALLED THE SON OF PHARAOH’S DAUGHTER.” --Hebrews xi. 24.

NO incident in any ancient biography has left a trace on the history of mankind so marked, as the one narrated in these few words. This must strike the thinker of every school, the Christian, the Jew, the Mahomedan, the Pagan; and even the poor infidel who believes nothing, in looking up the stream of human events, must feel that the influence of Moses has swayed the thought, the beliefs, the institutions, the laws, the general conditions of mankind, far more than that of any other of the ancients. And unlike theirs, this is an influence to which time only adds fresh vigour, to which

new races, tongues, and nations, are every year contributing an extended range. One of the most elaborate and searching critical historians of our day, at the beginning of his labour, says, "History was born the night that Moses left Egypt." Suppose he had not left Egypt -- what then? Suppose he had consented to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, had lived in a palace, had died on a royal couch, had been buried in a pyramid, and added one more cartoon to the escutcheons of Egyptian notables -- what then? The answer of the Christian is ready --- God would have raised up another Moses to be the deliverer of the people -- a prophet like unto Him that was to come. But for Him, to whom Moses was only a natural character, and all which followed but the natural effect of natural causes -- what must the answer be? It must be this -- Why, then, there would have been no Exodus, no Passover, no Ten Commandments, no Sabbath, no Book of Genesis, no Pentateuch, no Judges, no Prophets, no Hebrew nation, no Psalms, no Messiah, no Christian religion, no Bible. The world would have been without any faith teaching the one God; and so far as the test of experience indicates in this our nineteenth century mankind would have stood represented by three types -- China, Africa, Fiji.

"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter." In the spirit of inspiration Paul looks at the distant horizon of human

affairs, and sees the generations of men come up in nebulous indistinctness, and, without ever being defined individually to the eye, they set again in darkness, and reappear no more. But out of this undistinguishable multitude stand forth a few names, like the stars up in the high north which never set, though they pale in the presence of the sun; and these names continue day after day, and age after age, never setting, always shining, held in the firmament of heaven, pouring a light down upon earth. How is it that these elders obtained a good report? that, instead of perishing in the multitude, they have received a true immortality, which illuminates their names evermore, while mists cover those of other men? “By faith the elders obtained a good report.” By faith they wrought deeds which God thought worth recording. By faith they won a name which He has been pleased to invest with some part of his own immortality. And among these comes one, stepping out of a palace upon the stage of public affairs, and for the first moment dressed in courtly robes; but what strikes Paul is that, in the midst of princely opportunities, with his own hand he lays off these robes -- choosing for himself to be nobody, and less than nobody, because he has faith in God.

The subject before us then is --

*The faith of Moses: its Power, its Trial, and its Victory.*

What was the *Power* of the faith of Moses? This -- it was the “evidence of things not seen.” It was “the

substance of things hoped for.” Man has three sorts of things to deal with -- those that he can learn by his senses, by sight, feeling, and so on; those which he can learn by his reason; and those, the most important of all, that must be brought within range of reason by another faculty, and that is faith. Faith is to the soul what sense is to the body; or more properly, faith is, for knowing the moral and spiritual world, what sense is for knowing the external world of matter. The one world is as real as the other; we are made for both, and we belong to both, we live in the midst of both, we are concerned with both, both are acting upon us, and God has given us faculties for discerning both. We know cold or hot, sweet or bitter, hard or soft, loud or musical, not by reason or by faith, not by any mental or spiritual faculty, but through the organs of sense; and we can never discern God, heaven, angels, spirit, right, wrong, merely by the eye, the ear, or the reason. These are objects that must be spiritually discerned, and for spiritual discernment the soul has its faculties. As without the natural faculty of sight, objects may be present, and yet cannot be seen; so God may be here, the soul here, heaven here, the Saviour here, the guilt of sin here, and the great tempter nigh, and yet not be perceived. In natural sight there is no seeing without an object, an eye, and light. So in spiritual, the objects are around us, the faculty in us, but until the light of the blessed Spirit shines in upon the human

spirit, the man knows not God, knows not his own soul, knows not the world of spirits, knows not the Saviour, knows not the tempter. Let that light shine, and conceptions of things heard of give place to impressions of things discerned and felt. The things are no longer ideas, names, doctrines; they are realities, things and beings. Heaven is not a doctrine to a man that believes, but a place real and near; hell is not a name to the man that believes -- it is a prison; the devil is not an idea to him that believes, but a great foe; the Saviour is not an idea to the man that believes, but his Friend, his Redeemer, his Master, his Lord, his Protector, his All in all; God is not a "notion" to him that believes, any more than the sunlight is a conception to the child who is endeavouring to explain it to his blind father. To the father it is but a conception existing in his mind; to the boy it is a reality -- the impression of it is pouring upon his eye; he cannot explain it; he feels it, he knows it. So it is with the soul upon which God's light has shone and brought to view things that sense does not disclose, and reason does not explain, but which the Spirit of grace makes manifest by the medium of a simple trust in God.

Now, mark how this faith of Moses was realized. It was not a conception of things unseen but an evidence of them; not a dim, misty idea of things hoped for, but the substance of them: so that those things, instead of floating

before the eye of the soul in distant, cloudy unimpressiveness, came right in upon the thoughts, and feelings, and passions, with the force and incisiveness of a seal.

What did he realize? Look at the passage. First, he realized the presence of God in the midst of men. "Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people" -- what people? Those poor wretches, those brickmakers, daubed with mud, bowed with care and shame, the taskmaster over their degraded gangs. Look at them, driven like sheep, and the crack of the lash compelling them to work. Yet to Moses these are a people! Not the people of Jacob, not the people of Joseph, good and great man as he was, not even the people of grand old Abraham. But, by the light that is within, the covenant of God makes itself seen among them, and the presence of God is with them; they have his name, his knowledge, and his worship. They are God's people, and let all the world say what it will, He is with them, and not with the world.

Then there was another human presence. Seated within halls of polished granite; waited upon by princely retinues, with captains, and poets, and sages at his feet; aloft above the ordinary level of human greatness; invested with all power, speaker after the manner of men; holding in his hand not only the political, but the domestic and mental condition of his people; called a god, honoured as a god --

sits Pharaoh, of all human potentates the most awe-inspiring and impulsive then in the world. “Whom he would he slew, whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would set up, and whom he would put down.” As to life, he held it of no value; and when the wrath of the king was aroused, whether against a man, a town, or a province, it brought destruction. Moses had to look upon that presence, but he feared not the wrath of the king, because “he endured as seeing Him that is invisible.” Over the throne he saw a higher throne, above the sceptre a mightier sceptre; and, when the word of Pharaoh commanded death or life, he knew that One was above him in whose hand his breath was, and whose were all his ways. He realized God in the presence of the king, and God in the presence of the brickmakers, and O how that presence changed everything, and made the glory of the throne-room dim, and the dishonours of the brickfield bright! For God’s smile was here, and his frown there; and Moses felt that his presence overruled all.

He also realized the glory of Christ in the midst of reproach: “Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt.” Mark, when he heard them reproached because they would not worship the gods of Egypt, he did not consider the reproach merely in a family or a national point of view. God had given them the promise that it was out of their seed the Deliverer, the

Messiah, should come. The Lord had said it: it was settled, and, improbable as it might be, theirs was the great inheritance, that of them, as pertaining to the flesh, Christ should come; and therefore, come what might, that Hebrew people was to be preserved, the line was never to be broken until the world had seen the world's Redeemer through that line brought forth. So, that as to us, through eighteen hundred years that are past, faith brings up Christ as the glory, and the beauty, and the strength, and the salvation of men; so to Moses, through the years that were yet to come, faith brought up Christ to view, and he felt that it was only in being a Hebrew he could range himself on his side, and be one to bear part in preparing for the glory of his kingdom.

Further, he realized heavenly reward in the presence of earthly allurements. "He had respect unto the recompence of the reward." He saw the treasures in Egypt, he saw and felt the bitterness of reproach, he saw the countenances of haughty soldiers and sneering wits; but he had another eye. He was not dependent for all he knew on what his eyes and ears showed him. We read in our English version, "He had respect unto the recompence of the reward:" the meaning is, He looked up, looked away, to the recompence of the reward. He not only looked at these things, but at those -- not only felt these, but felt those. Like Paul, "he looked not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen." When the spirit is illuminated, divine things are



brought within view. He looked up: he knew what pleasure was, he did not undervalue it, but then it was not eternal. He knew what wealth was; but he knew that presently he should be in a world where riches are not counted in diamonds and emeralds, and gold and silver, but in grace, in the love of God, and love of our neighbor. He knew what reproach was -- he did not seek it; he knew what affliction was -- he would not make it for himself: but then these things were not to last for ever; he would soon be "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest." He looked at those things -- he looked at these: and the one was substance, the other temporal; the one was made for him, and he made for it -- it would surround him for ever and ever, through all the changes of his never-ending life. As for the other it affected but the pilgrim-state, would last but while he was on his way home. He thought of the trouble of the journey; but he wanted a good home -- a home where he should rest through countless ages.

This, then, was the *Power* of his faith; it saw, discerned, felt, was conscious of, that world which sense does not bring to view. It counteracted the influence wielded by sense when it alone brings perceptions to the human soul; predominating over the senses and subduing them, causing the material, mortal, perishable members wherewith man is provided, to take the place, not of masters, enslaving and binding his immortal spirit, but of

servants, obeying it for temporal purposes, acknowledging it as their authority and power, as it acknowledges and looks up to the Spirit of the Lord. Faith realizes God in the presence of men, whether afflicted or exalted -- realizes Christ in the midst of all the trials and reproach of his church and people -- realizes heaven under all the baits of sin and threats of persecution.

Now as to the *Trial* of this faith. -- It came upon Moses in a strange form. He must either break with the people of God, be false to his own conscience, or refuse to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. When did the trial come? Not when he was a child, not when a mere youth, when he might easily have been carried away by affection for his mother; but "when he was come to years," forty years old, sufficiently versed in the world to have escaped from the influence of home. He had tasted of the pleasures of life -- tasted of pride, tasted of power, tasted of fame. He was old enough to have a prospect of long life before him; just at the time when his past reputation was beginning to bud into future power and renown. And now it came into his heart to visit his brethren, and to look upon their burdens. In his own narrative he tells us wonderfully little; and of that, some not to his own credit. All we know is this, that God made known to him that he was the instrument whom He had chosen to be the deliverer of his people, and that in order to do it he must visit his brethren and look upon their

burdens -- must go out from the palace, leave the court circle, compromise his position, and identify himself with the cares, and toils, and shame of Israel. We know no more than that God made that known: he was called to that sacrifice.

Few things make sin appear so justifiable to a man as when he thinks it certain "nobody was ever tempted like me." We often think, if we can say that, it is often right to do wrong. Moses might have said, "It is no fault of mine that I became the son of Pharaoh's daughter; it is no fault of mine that I found myself in a palace, waited upon by a retinue of courtly servants, found the greatest men of the nation crowding to do me honour, found the guards and the officers paying reverence to me, found the whole court proud of my acquaintance and the whole nation looking up to me; it is no fault of mine that my name was written among the princes of the blood, and that I stood near to the throne: it came upon me -- I did not seek it. And, now that I have been raised to that position, why must I forego it all? Why must I do what never was required of any human being before? If I am to deliver the people -- might it not be done in some other way? Might not Providence bring me to the throne, and then I could break their yoke and set them free, and even make them masters of the Egyptians? Would not that be a grander thing than taking them away to a little country like Palestine? There never was a trial like this."

That is true, but he saw “Him that is invisible.” God said, “This is thy work,” and God is Master. He has a right to appoint what he pleases.

It tried his faith by the love of pleasure. It is easy for you and me to think of Moses as elevated far above human frailty. But he was not. He had sat at the royal table, had been dressed in royal robes, had been waited upon by princely attendants, had received the acclaims of the people, had felt the charms of the court, the fascinations of the camp, the dangers of struggle, and the pleasures of victory. All these were awaiting him, wooing him to taste their delights. Bright eyes were longing for the admiration of the young prince, men versed in pleasure were ready to minister to every appetite, to regale every taste, rowers proud to speed him on the river, horsemen to guide him in the chase, singers to fill his chambers with mirth, poets to set his deeds to numbers. But God said, Not these things, but affliction with the people of God for thee! It was hard, but it was duty, and must be done.

It tried him by the love of riches. He had already a princely fortune, and what he might have who could tell? He had seen “the treasures in Egypt” -- those stores of costly gems of rarest beauty. You remember that when our own great eastern conqueror, Clive, was accused in Parliament of having amassed too much during the period of his conquests, he boldly said, “Why, when I think of that

treasure, and see the hills of gold and silver here, and the jewels there, I declare I am astonished at my own moderation.” Conceive then of this young prince, walking through the treasure-houses, and then going up to a pinnacle of the palace, and looking abroad upon the land and thinking, It may all be mine one day; and then feeling, Must I give it up, and go to be I know not what -- perhaps a brickmaker, perhaps to spend my whole life in the desert, and never have a house to call my own, or a roof to cover me? Must I? “Yes, yes, you must!” that is God’s appointment.

It tried him by an appeal to pride. There were many great names at that time in the world, many lordly families, many dynasties called illustrious, but they were as nothing compared with Pharaoh. He was at the summit of human greatness, and Moses was the son of Pharaoh’s daughter. How many kings would have given their kingdom for that name! And was he to come down to the level of that man there in the mud, or perhaps see the very man that had bent upon his knees asking of him a favour, standing over him with the lash of the taskmaster? No, he might have said, flesh and blood cannot bear it. And flesh and blood could not have borne it. It was not flesh and blood; it was the Spirit of God working upon the spirit of man that alone could have rendered it tolerable.

It tried him by an appeal to ambition. He was now a prince -- he might be a king. He might: we have not scriptural authority for saying that he was the heir to the kingdom, but he knew what he was, and others knew it too. He was a prince already, and he was not a butterfly of the palace, but a man "mighty in word and deed." He had done things that the prompt men of action and the brave men of battle delighted to tell. He was not a mere man of action, but was mighty in word -- one of those that think things at which others wonder, and say things to which others eagerly listen -- one who, by simple intellectual preeminence, must in any council sit as king. There was no man there like Moses. He had that in him which would have made him not only a Pharaoh, but such a Pharaoh as never had reigned -- greater, wiser, brighter, stronger of hand, grander in purpose, mightier in renown, more illustrious in every respect, than any that had gone before him. O, if one could see that young man, standing and looking at the two views before him, and saying, "Must I come to this? If I remain, that old Nile which one day saw me floating upon its waves an outcast child, will see me another day coming down in power and state from greater heights than ever Pharaoh ascended to; and never barge so glorious as shall be that one; and what music and banners before and what a following behind, and what an acclaim from either bank, that will not merely make the old Nile roll

along the name of Moses, but will carry it back to the Arabian and Libyan shores, and the bluff rocks and the sands will ring as they have never rung before with the name of king or conqueror.” And this is no mere conjecture. He must have had such visions: he could not have been in that position without them -- the heart and the tempter were the same then as now. And must he turn his back on it all?

It tried him by an appeal to his generosity. What! refuse to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter? Did she not find thee an outcast in the river, and deliver thee from certain and speedy death? And was it not she who had thee nursed by thine own mother? Was it not she who made thee a prince, and caused thee to have the best education the world could give -- who gave thee the proudest name that human lips could utter? Has she not identified her honour with thine? And now when there is reason to believe that the future would justify her favour, art thou to turn upon her and make every one who was jealous of her favour for the young Hebrew, point at her and reproach her? “Ah, the dog has turned to his vomit again. You thought to make a prince of him, but he was a Jew, and you could make nothing but a Jew of him. He was born a slave, and he has gone back to the degradation from which you tried to raise him.” To a man like Moses this part of the trial would cut more keenly than any other. O Lord, he might have said,

call me not to this! But God did call him to it: it was to be done. And there he stood -- all, all these forces drawing upon one side; on the other, God, heaven, Christ, eternity. But God is more than man, heaven more than earth, Christ more than all suffering, and eternity more than life itself. Faith gained the *victory*.

The *Victory* is traceable, first in the *thoughts* of Moses, then in his *will*, then in his *actions*. Mark how the different operations are shown: -- First, in his thoughts, in his views of things -- “Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt.” His mind was brought to that state that enabled him to form such an estimate of things as made reproach appear better than the treasures of Egypt; made affliction with the people of God better than the pleasures of sin for a season. Of course, we judge according as we see. If a man looks at jewels and bits of glass in the dark, he will not make any great distinction between them; how different if he looks at them in the light! So when a man looks at riches, solid gold and solid silver, and houses and furniture, and good food and good clothes, and friends, and everything the world can give, merely in the light of the dim earthly eye, they look very substantial and precious; but when the heavenly light comes they fade! I do not mean that their value diminishes -- their real value is quite as great to the man that has faith as to him that has not. The difference is this -- he takes the glass for glass, he



does not take it for diamond. He knows that it is not diamond, that it will not do the work of diamond, will not bring its price. And so, when the enlightening power of the Spirit is upon man, then earthly riches and earthly cares have their just weight and value assigned them, but brighter, purer, more precious things, are set beside them, and in comparison with these they seem, not nothing, but next to nothing. Seeing these greater riches, man says, If in all my life I have nothing but poverty and shame, and yet have Christ, I am a richer man. I gain a crown that never fades, and lose a toy that may not last a year. Yes, I will count the very loss gain. That is the state of mind to which a thorough manifestation of unseen things to the soul by faith acting upon the judgment will bring man. Now without this there is no foundation for any Christian choice. Our will can never be carried unless our convictions are carried. Just in proportion as our perception of spiritual realities is clear, so will our convictions be; and then, when our convictions are firm, the will is impelled to choose. A man may have a conviction of what is right, and not choose to follow it; but man never chooses the right in preference to the wrong without a clear perception of its superior worth. First Moses had this conviction; he concluded that the reproach of Christ represented more real value than the treasures in Egypt, and then came the *choice*.

He chose “rather to suffer affliction.” No doubt he would rather have avoided the affliction: he was like you and me; he would rather have escaped it. But the case was thus -- either he must take the affliction and Christ, or turn away from both Christ and the affliction. Therefore he chose “rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.” Wonderful moment in the history of that soul, and of our race, when his heart heaved with the firm resolve, “I will go and visit my brethren!”

The choice being made, the action followed; he “refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter.” This is not always the case. Ah, some of us, perhaps, could tell of one who advanced so far as to make up his mind, and say, “I will do it;” but when it came to the actual point of doing he thought, “Not this time, I will wait for another opportunity.” How different with Moses! He “refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter.” That was the crowning act that sealed the inward victory.

As to the *effects* of this decision. Well, upon Moses the first effect was simply one of sacrifice. He had to take a last look at the palace; to gaze upon the court, and say to himself, I shall never be in this circle again. He had to pass the guards, and, as they saluted, to feel, They will never do honour to me more. And one can see him as he crossed the line between the green land of Egypt and the desert; and

then as he went up that barren hill, without a tree or a shrub, without a solitary goat upon it, and from the height looked upon the valley of the Nile, as the sun set behind the river, city, pyramids, and palm trees, he would seem to hear a voice saying, Come back, Moses, greatest of the Pharaohs! Come and have a pyramid grander than that of Cheops! And then he turned to the desert, and for forty years had not a roof to cover him, nothing but a herdsman's tent, not one courtly banquet; the fierce heat of Sinai by day, by night the calm clear sky, and in winter-time the piercing frost.

O, it was sacrifice. If any one had gone to the palace, and taken some old courtier, and said, Do you remember Moses, that used to be in the palace nearly forty years ago? Yes, he would have said, of course, every one remembers him; there never was such a youth; he might have been king, but he threw himself away. He had some religious fancy about the Messiah coming from the Hebrews, and that he must return to them; he is buried somewhere in the desert. And so it was. Up to the time of his death he never had a house of his own, never had a foot of land, and never knew what a day's ease was.

And God may call us to sacrifice we know not what. We have not a palace nor a principedom to give up; but we have our own little world, and it may be large enough to

hold us from Christ. Give it up, give it up, no matter at what sacrifice.

But, then, if the effect was sacrifice it was also moral glory. The old man that I have mentioned -- and it is not an imaginary thing, such a thing must have taken place -- said, He has thrown himself away. Ah! wait a little while: the day will come when Moses will cross the threshold of that palace once more. The guards do not salute him, but their hearts tremble. The attendants do not prostrate themselves, but they look as they never looked before; while in all that circle only one head is erect with the consciousness of truth and power; and even Pharaoh becomes suppliant, and asks Moses to pray to God that the plague may cease. Look at that scene! God knows how to bring such things about; and if we sacrifice all for him, he will in his own way do all for us.

I said Moses might have had a pyramid -- might have been laid in one of those houses of glory on which the eastern kings spent the treasures and talent of a lifetime to prepare for their burial. Well, he never had: --

“No man dug his sepulchre, and no man saw it e’er;  
’Twas the angels of God upturned the sod, and laid the dead man there.”

All the stately history of the East never reared a tomb so often read of spoken of, and envied, as the unknown grave

wherein the body of Moses was laid to await the coming of Christ. And in that grave unseen by human eye, in the land of Moab, over against Bethpeor, he has lain covered with a glory and sending forth an influence that never proceeded from the tomb of king, of poet, or of hero. And every day of every year his name grows greater, stronger, brighter; new tongues repeat his story, new churches read his words. And Pharaoh now lives only in the history of Moses; and men know and care about him, and all his great courtiers and captains, nothing whatever but what is connected with the history of him who in their view threw himself away.

Did we judge of Moses' triumph by the ordinary standard of human glory, why, we should say, what is all the glory of the kings, of the poets, of the soldiers of any nation in comparison with this? for once they are named, quoted, or remembered, Moses is a hundred times. And why does God give it? When the Hindoo look up into the sky and see the bright streak called the Milky Way, and then look down upon the earth and see the great Ganges, they say it is the continuation of that river up in heaven, which passes from the sky by the Himalayas, and runs upon the earth. We see the streams of terrestrial glory, the name, renown, and character, which God has given to his servant Moses; and this is but a dim reflection of an ever-rolling, ever-widening, ever-brightening stream of glory in the skies.

Would we seek this glory? Would we make it our own? Would we lay hold on eternal life? If so, we may, “without money and without price,” without delay, in this place, for Christ is here. Are we ready to become his children, to ask him to be our Master? Let us lift up our hearts and say, O thou that art life, and wealth, and glory, all in one, take us, pardon us, and make us thine; and let the covenant stand between Thee and us for ever. -- WILLIAM ARTHUR, M.A.

-----

## THE CHILDREN’S SERVICE.

OF THE BOY WHO HAD DREAMS THAT CAME TRUE.

THE mother of the boy about whom I wish now to tell you, had been married for some years before God gave her a babe to take care of. At last her heart was made very glad by getting this child. She had prayed to God for a son, and he gave her one who lived to be a great and good man. But his mother did not see his greatness on earth. She had another little boy some time afterwards, and then she died. The names of the two little brothers were Joseph and Benjamin, and you may be sure that their father Jacob was

the more fond of them both that their mother, whom he had loved very dearly, was dead. As Joseph grew up, too, he proved a good, wise child, which made him still dearer to his father's heart. He had a number of brothers born to his father by other wives (for in those days having more wives than one, though against God's first law, was allowed), and the boy was often with them in the fields keeping the sheep and cattle. When there, he used to see the bad conduct of his elder brothers, and when he went home he would tell his father of it. This grieved their father, but it made the little boy more than ever dear to him. The rest of Jacob's sons soon saw this great liking for Joseph, and their father made it yet plainer by acts of special favour to him. In particular, he made him a coat of different colours, pretty and gay to look at, and liked to have him wear it. But while it made the father happy, it made the brothers very angry, to see it; and they carried their feelings so far that they began to hate Joseph, and used to speak very harshly to him, though he was but young and tender.

After a time a strange thing happened which added to the anger of the elder brothers. You know what it is to dream. You have often dreamed no doubt; sometimes of pleasant and sometimes of painful things. Generally it has happened that you fancied in your sleep scenes and occurrences like those when awake; for the wise man says

that “a dream cometh of the multitude of business.” It was the same long ago as to most dreams. But it pleased God In some cases to send dreams that were meant to show things to come. People then had not a Bible to guide them, and God often gave directions by visions, and voices, and dreams. So he was pleased to speak to Joseph in prophetic sights given him in sleep. The sights he had were these: -- He thought that he was in the harvest fields along with his brothers, and they were all binding sheaves, when, behold, the sheaf he had just bound rose from the ground, and stood straight up, and then his brothers’ sheaves rose too and came round about his, and bowed before it. Again, he thought he was standing and looking up to the sky, when he seemed to see the sun and the moon and eleven stars of brightness coming and saluting him. I do not know whether he had any idea himself what those strange dreams cold mean, but at least he thought them curious, and he told them to his brothers and his father. They guessed very readily that the meaning of the dreams was that Joseph was to be greater than them all, and the brothers were extremely angry, and could not bear to hear him. Even his father rebuked him, as if his dreams showed him to be proud; but he was much struck with them for all that, and often turned them over in his mind. He thought they must surely be from God, though it appeared very unlikely that what seemed to be their meaning could ever come to pass.



It was not very long before he was made quite to think that they never could have fulfilment. Shepherds of those times in the East often had to take their flocks a long way from their tents, in order to get sufficient grass, and Jacob's sons had been away for a while on this errand, when one day he said to Joseph, Go, and see your brothers, and bring me word whether they are all well. So the youth left his father, and started on his journey to the place where Jacob supposed his sons then to be. But when he came to the place, he could not find them. So he wandered about till a man met him who could tell him that his brothers had lately gone to another place. Very glad to know this, he hastened after them, and before long they saw him coming across the country, with his coat of colours on. Then very wicked thoughts came into their mind, and they said with hate and scorn in their hearts, See this dreamer! Come and let us kill him, and throw him into a pit, and tell our father that the lions have torn him, and we shall see what his dreams will come to. One of them however, was shocked at their proposal, and thought of a plan to save them. He said, Do not let us lay our hands on him to shed his blood, but cast him into the deep pit near by, and let him die there. His purpose was to go afterwards and take him out of the pit, and take him back to his father. The cruel brothers agreed to take this course, and when Joseph came to them, with his father's love, and inquiries about their health, they laid

rough hold of him, and took off his gay coat, and though he cried to them to spare him, they cast him into the pit. They saw his bitter distress, but they did not mind it; a brother's prayers and tears could not move the hearts which envy had hardened. So callous were they, that after they had done the cruel deed, they sat down to meat as if they had been doing no evil. Reuben, the one that wished to save him, slipped away by himself to come round to the pit by and by, and take him home. But while he was away, things took another turn. Some merchant men of Gilead came past, going to Egypt with balm and spicery, and the brothers thought they could get rid of Joseph, and make some money as well, by selling him for a slave. So they took him up out of the pit, and perhaps he thought they were going to have pity on him, and let him go back to his father. But he soon found they had only changed one cruel purpose for another, for they made a bargain with the Ishmaelites to give their brother for twenty pieces of silver, and the rough men took him away with them to sell him in Egypt. The brothers, after they saw him borne away out of sight, took his coat, and tore it, and dipped it in the blood of a goat which they had killed, and carried it to Jacob, and said, See, we found this; is it thy son's coat? Nor did their father's bitter, bitter grief bring them to confess their wicked action. I daresay they were sometimes sorry they had done what they did, but did not like to own it: they even tried to comfort their

father; but years went past, and he said, I will mourn for my son till I go down to the grave.

In the meantime the merchants rode on with their camels, and came to the royal town in Egypt, and among their other merchandise offered to sell the Hebrew slave. So a high officer of the king's household wanted to purchase one, and he bought Joseph, and brought him home to his house. The youth conducted himself so well that his master became very fond of him, and trusted him with all his goods and business. God blessed him much, and everything went well with him. But one day his mistress wished him to sin with her, and because he would not, she told a great lie about him to his master, and made her husband so angry that he took Joseph and threw him into prison. I wonder if when there he ever thought about his dreams. If he did, he would hardly hope now to get them brought to pass. Perhaps he had given up thinking of them altogether. He would not forget his father, however; and I think that in the prison he learned to think of his brethren with feelings of forgiveness. And strange to say, his going to prison was just God's way of preparing for making good the dreams of his childhood. How this came about, however, must be told in another story.

-----

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Where did Joseph's mother die?
2. Can you find a verse from which we may infer that Rachel prayed to God to give her a babe?
3. Do you know any other mother in the Bible who prayed for a babe?
4. Do you recollect a circumstance when Jacob was exposed to danger, which showed that he loved Rachel much?
5. What other father do we read of that sent a younger son to bring him word of the welfare of his elder brothers?
6. Who was it that was given up, long after Joseph's time, to a cruel death through hate and envy?
7. Do you know of any one besides Joseph sold to his enemies for money?

ANSWERS will be easily found by consulting the following chapters: --  
Gen. xxxv.; Gen. xxx.; 1 Sam. i.; Gen. xxxiii.; 1 Sam. xvii.; Matt. xxvii.;  
Matt. xxvi., xxvii.

-----

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE LESSONS.

1. Did not Joseph's brethren act very wickedly in selling him into Egypt?

2. Did God overrule their cruelty and wickedness for bringing about his own wise and gracious purposes?

3. What was the end which God had more immediately in view in permitting Joseph to be sent into Egypt? Gen. xlv. 7.

4. How old was Jacob when he was introduced to Pharaoh? How old when he died? Gen. xlvii. 9, 28.

-----

*Prayer.*

O GOD, who lovest little children, hear the prayers of fathers and mothers for their boys and girls, and bless their endeavors to bring them up in the nurture of Christ. Be very kind to all little ones from whom death has taken away their mother, and let thy tender care make up to them for their great want. Watch over all orphan children, and be their Father, and the guide of their youth. Give thy Spirit to brothers and sisters dwelling together, that they may live in holy love. Hasten the day when men shall do no more cruel murders, and sell and buy no more slaves. Make all of us kind and gentle and true, like Jesus, in whose name we pray this prayer, and through whom we would offer Thee praise, and honour, and glory, for ever. *Amen.*

-----

## EVENING WORSHIP.

Almighty and all-sufficient God, who desirest the good and joy of all who believe in Thy Son, grant unto us Thy grace that we may have such perfect confidence in Thy presence, Thy love, and Thy promises, as to be able to resist temptation, overcome the world, persevere in duty, enjoy peace in Thee, whether in prosperity or adversity, and in every condition of life glorify Thy name by a holy and cheerful submission and obedience to Thy will. *Amen.*

### HYMN, or *Psalm lxxviii. 18-20.*

Vain, delusive world, adieu,  
With all of creature-good!  
Only Jesus I pursue,  
Who bought me with his blood:  
All thy pleasures I forego,

I trample on thy wealth and pride:  
Only Jesus will I know  
And Jesus crucified.

Turning to my rest again,  
The Saviour I adore:  
He relieves my grief and pain,  
And bids me weep no more.  
Rivers of salvation flow  
From out his head, his hands, his side:  
Only Jesus will I know,  
And Jesus crucified.

Here will I set up my rest:  
My fluctuating heart  
From the haven of his breast  
Shall never more depart.  
Whither should a sinner go?  
His wounds for me stand open wide;  
Only Jesus will I know,  
And Jesus crucified.

GENESIS XLV. 1-9 24-28.

THEN Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren. 2. And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard. 3. And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph, doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence. 4. And Joseph said unto his brethren, come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. 5. Now, therefore be not grieved nor angry with yourselves that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you to preserve life. 6. For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years, in which there shall be neither earing nor harvest. 7. And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. 8. So now, it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt. 9. Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt; come down unto me, tarry not. 24. So he sent his brethren away, and they departed: and he said unto them, See that ye fall not out by the way. 25. And they went out of Egypt, and came



into the land of Canaan unto Jacob their father, 26. And told him, saying, Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt. And Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not. 27. And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them: and when he saw the wagons, which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived. 28. And Israel said, It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die.

#### GENESIS, XLVII. 7-10, 28-31.

7. And Joseph brought in Jacob his father, and set him before Pharaoh: and Jacob blessed Pharaoh. 8. And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old art thou? 9. And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage. 10. And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh. 28. And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years; so the whole age of Jacob was an hundred forty and seven years. 29. And the time drew nigh that Israel must die: and he called his son Joseph, and said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, and deal kindly and truly

with me: bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt: 30. But I will lie with my fathers; and thou shalt carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their burying place. And he said, I will do as thou hast said. 31. And he said, Swear unto me. And he swore unto him. And Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head.

*Prayer.*

GOD be merciful to us, and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us. Lord, help our infirmities, for we know not what to pray for as we ought. May the Spirit of God make intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Grant that within us, O Lord, there may be heavenly longings, -- a hungering and thirsting after righteousness. May our souls pant after God; and do Thou give us the desire of our hearts. May we worship Thee, who art a Spirit, in spirit and in truth. May we find acceptance through Jesus Christ. In His name alone we draw near unto Thee, O Lord: we have no righteousness of our own. Guilty and helpless, we look to Thee for help, we call on Thee for pardon. Jesus, Son of David, have mercy upon us! We thank Thee that Thou art always waiting to bless, always ready to save, ready to offer Thy intercession in behalf of those who approach unto God in Thy name.

According to Thy gracious word, create in us a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within us. Lord, we believe; help Thou our unbelief. Lord, increase our faith. Lord, perfect that which concerneth us. If Thou hast begun a good work in us, perform it until the day of Jesus Christ; if that work has not been begun, O that it may begin now. Above all other things make us earnest about salvation -- to grow in grace, to increase in the likeness of Jesus, to be more conformed to Thy will, to rejoice more in Him who is our Lord, our life, our all. Save us from being so much taken up with the things that perish. Save us, we beseech Thee, from loving too much this world; help us that that we may not be overcome by it, but overcome it. O that we may have that faith which overcometh the world. Grant us the victory! Thou knowest our daily conflicts, our daily trials, our daily difficulties. O be Thou to us an all-sufficient friend and helper. Strengthen us for that trial, encourage us to that conflict, give us patience to wait and quietly hope for the salvation of God; and if we are called to experience that this is a vale of tears, may we have Thee near to cheer us with Thy presence, to strengthen us with Thy sympathy, to uphold us by Thy Spirit. So help us to press on from strength to strength, until we come to Thine eternal joy. Have mercy upon us, O Lord, and hear these our unworthy prayers, as we present them in His name, in whose words we offer up our petitions, and say, "Our Father," &c. *Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

Monday.

*Morning.*

**He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty;  
and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.**

A soft answer turneth away wrath; but grievous words  
stir up anger.

The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright; but the  
mouth of fools poureth out foolishness.

Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled  
ox and hatred therewith.

A wrathful man stirreth up strife: but he that is slow to  
anger appeaseth strife.

Prov. xvi. 32. Prov. xv. 1, 2, 17, 18.

*Evening.*

**A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the  
fool rageth, and is confident.**

He that is soon angry dealeth foolishly; and a man of wicked devices is hated.

The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression.

Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking be put away from you with all malice.

Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.

Prov. xiv. 16, 17. Prov. xix. 11. Eph. iv. 31. 1 Cor. xiv. 20.

## Tuesday.

### *Morning.*

**Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings,**

As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby:

If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy?

For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.

1 Peter ii. 1, 2, 3. Prov. xxvii. 4. Gal. v. 14, 15.

*Evening.*

**This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.**

For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and they are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Gal. v. 16, 17, 19, 21.

**Wednesday.**

*Morning.*

**If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.**

For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.

But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.

But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

James i. 26. James iii. 2, 14, 17, 18.

*Evening.*

**All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.**

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ.

Be ye patient; stablish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the Judge standeth before the door.

Isa. liii. 6, 7. 2 Cor. x. 1. James v. 8, 9.

## Thursday.

### *Morning.*

**Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hast promised to them that love him?**

Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble.

The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies.

The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.

James ii. 5.      Ps. xli. 1, 2, 3.

### *Evening.*

**Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.**

The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again; but the righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth.

He is ever merciful and lendeth, and his seed is blessed.



Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is the power of thine hand to do it.

Say not unto thy neighbour, Go, and come again, and to-morrow I will give; when thou hast it by thee.

He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.

Gal. vi. 2.    Ps. xxxvii. 21, 26.    Prov. iii. 27, 28.    Prov. xix. 17.

## Friday.

*Morning.*

**But the liberal deviseth liberal things; and by liberal things shall he stand.**

He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker: but he that honoureth him hath mercy on the poor.

Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.

Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase:

So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.

Isa. xxxii. 8.    Prov. xiv. 31.    Eccl. xi. 1.    Prov. iii. 9, 10.

*Evening.*

**When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind:**

And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak; and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.

Luke xiv. 13, 14. Acts xx. 35. Matt. x. 42.

## **Saturday.**

*Morning.*

**And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.**

For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them.

And if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same.

And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.

But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend,  
hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great,  
and ye shall be the children of the Highest; for he is kind  
unto the unthankful and to the evil.

Luke vi. 31, 32, 33, 34, 35.

*Evening.*

**For the Lord heareth the poor, and despiseth not his  
prisoners.**

He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy  
poor with judgment.

For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor  
also, and him that hath no helper.

He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the  
souls of the needy.

He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence:  
and precious shall their blood be in his sight.

He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not  
despise their prayer.

Ps. lix. 33.      Ps. lxxii. 2, 12, 13, 14.      Ps. cii. 17.

# HOME PREACHER, OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

TENTH WEEK.

## MORNING WORSHIP.

**M**OST holy and loving Jesus, teach us ever to acknowledge Thee as our only Lord and Master, and ourselves as Thy servants and disciples, that so we may ever sit at Thy feet, and with meekness learn of Thee. Grant, O Lord, that we may so believe, think, feel, and act, that we may never hinder, but ever advance by our faith and life, Thy holy cause and kingdom. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm xc. 14-17.*

Come, gracious Lord, descend and dwell,  
By faith and love, in every breast:  
Then shall we know, and taste, and feel  
The joys that cannot be express'd.

Come, fill our hearts with inward strength;  
Make our enlarged souls embrace  
The depth and height, and breadth and length,  
Of thine immeasurable grace!

Now to the God, whose power can do  
More than our thoughts or wishes know,  
Be everlasting honours done,  
By all the church, through Christ his Son!

GENESIS XLVIII. 1-12, 20-22.

AND it came to pass after these things, that one told Joseph, Behold, thy father is sick: and he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. 2. And one told Jacob, and said, Behold, thy son Joseph cometh unto thee. And Israel strengthened himself, and sat upon the bed. 3. And Jacob said unto Joseph, God Almighty appeared unto me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and blessed me, 4. And said unto me, Behold, I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people; and will give this land to thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession. 5. And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt, before I came unto thee into Egypt, are mine: as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine. 6. And thy issue, which thou begetteth after them, shall be thine, and shall be called after the name of their brethren in their inheritance. 7. And as for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan in the

way, when yet there was but a little way to come unto Ephrath: the same is Beth-lehem. 8. And Israel beheld Joseph's sons, and said, Who are these? 9. And Joseph said unto his father, They are my sons, whom God hath given me in this place. And he said, Bring them, I pray thee, unto me, and I will bless them. 10. (Now the eyes of Israel were dim for age, so that he could not see.) And he brought them near unto him; and he kissed them, and embraced them, &c.

### GENESIS XLIX. 29-33.

AND he charged them, and said unto them, I am to be gathered unto my people: bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite; 30. In the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite, for a possession of a burying-place. 31. There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife, and there I buried Leah. 31. The purchase of the field, and of the cave that is therein, was from the children of Heth. 33. And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people.

## GENESIS L. 1-2, 7, 12-15.

And Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him. 2. And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father: and the physicians embalmed Israel. 7. And Joseph went up to bury his father: and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt. 12. And his sons did unto him according as he commanded them: 13. For his sons carried him into the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, which Abraham bought with the field, for a possession of a burying-place, of Ephron the Hittite, before Mamre.

---

### *Prayer.*

O LORD, our heavenly Father, we adore Thee as the Father of spirits, and the bounteous Giver of every mercy both for this life and for the life to come. We bless Thee for permitting us to enter upon another sacred Sabbath, and implore Thee to sanctify its privileges to our eternal good.

We confess with sorrow that we have sinned against Thee, times without number, in thought and word and deed;

may our convictions of the evil of sin be deep and penitent; give us the broken and contrite heart, and dispose us earnestly to seek Thy forgiving mercy. Through the death and sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, blot out all our sins, and receive us to Thy favour.

May we consecrate this sacred day to the duties of devout thankfulness, spiritual worship, and active service for the good of others. Let all our social intercourse be seasoned with grace to promote our mutual edification. Grant us the assistance of Thy Holy Spirit in the duties of public and private worship. May our confession of sin, our prayers and praises, be the language of contrite and believing hearts, and acceptable to Thee through Christ our Lord. May Thy word, read and preached, be received by us in pure affection, and applied by the Holy Spirit to our own hearts. What we know not, teach Thou us, confirm our faith, encourage our hopes, purify and quicken our affections, and fit us to serve thee, in wisdom and faithfulness, in our several stations in life. Assist Thy servants who may this day labour in the ministry of Thy word; convince sinners of their guilt and peril, and reveal Christ to them as the only way to the Father. May they who seek to teach others know for themselves that Christ is the power of God unto salvation; thus out of the fulness of a grateful and believing heart may they successfully commend



Christ Jesus to others, and find Him more and more precious to their own souls.

We plead with Thee on behalf of the thousands of our fellow men who may misspend this Sabbath day in desecration, negligence, and sin. Show them the guilt and folly of wasting these sacred seasons, and the peril that must one day overtake them, and give them repentance to salvation.

Look in mercy on houses of mourning, with their varied scenes of suffering, want, or trial. Give them patience and strength equal to their day, and a happy deliverance from all their sorrows. Be graciously present with us throughout the day, and with all with whom we have at any time gone to the house of God in company; let our prayers, though now separated, be accepted for each other. Receive our thanksgivings for all Thy mercies, temporal as well as spiritual; may we and all who may worship with us be edified with Thy truth this day, and Thy name be increasingly glorified in us and by us, through the merits and mediation of Thy beloved Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O LORD, our Heavenly Father, our preserver and guide,  
as Thou has brought us to the beginning of another  
Sabbath, grant us the continuance of Thy gracious favour;  
direct, sanctify, and govern us in all our thoughts, words,  
and acts, that by Thy almighty grace we may be preserved  
in body and soul, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, or *Psalm xxxiv. 1-7.*

O HOLY Saviour, Friend unseen!  
The faint, the weak, on Thee may lean;  
Help me throughout life's varying scene,  
By faith to cling to Thee!

Though faith and hope awhile be tried,  
I ask not, need not, aught beside;  
How safe, how calm, how satisfied,  
The souls that cling to Thee!

They fear not life's rough storms to brave,  
Since Thou art near and strong to save;  
Nor shudder e'en at death's dark wave,  
Because they cling to Thee!

Bless'd is my lot, whate'er befall,  
What can disturb me, who appal,  
While, as my strength, my rock, my all,  
Saviour! I cling to Thee!

### HEBREWS XII. 1-13.

WHEREFORE, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. 2. Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. 4. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. 5. And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: 6. For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. 7. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons: for what son

is he whom the father chasteneth not? 8. But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. 9. Furthermore, we have fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? 10. For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. 11. Now, no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. 12. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; 13. And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

-----

## SERMON X.

“BE THOU FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH, AND I WILL GIVE THEE A CROWN OF LIFE.” -- Rev. ii. 10.

THE crown of life here promised as strong encouragement to the suffering Christians of Smyrna is connected with counsels which must be diligently considered; for whenever the Holy Scriptures hold forth a prize, they take care to remind the combatants of the warfare whereby it is to be gained.

The Christian is engaged in a *severe and unceasing conflict*. The life of faith is everywhere represented as full of hardship and struggle. Look at Scripture characters, from Abel to the last chapter of Malachi, and from the birth of John the Baptist to the exile of John the Evangelist, every page of their eventful lives is inscribed with the records of conflicts, sometimes darkened by sorrow and defeat, and sometimes illumined by triumph. It is true that children in their baptism are admitted among the soldiers of Christ. But each young Christian expects somehow to be exempted from the severer conflicts which beset others. But he has not long given his heart to Christ, before he discovers that his pathway to heaven is beset with enemies. There are but two great parties in the world -- those who

are for Christ, and those who are against Him. The eyes of the young convert are opened to see the ways before him peopled with combatants, still he is not dismayed; formidable as the prospect is, his course is taken, and his resolutions fixed to be on the Lord's side; in humility and faithfulness he girds himself for the conflict, and puts on the whole armour of God.

He soon discovers that his first and great conflict begins with *his own heart*. Like Moses, who expected that as soon as he offered himself to be their Deliverer, the Israelites would accept him, so the young Christian imagines that the enmity of his own heart will soon give way, and it will be an easy task to bring every thought to the obedience of Christ; but he finds it otherwise. The flesh lusting against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; the law of sin in his members warring against the law of Christ in his mind; the presence of evil among the desires to do good, and all that spiritual contention which St Paul describes so vividly in his seventh chapter of Romans -- this becomes now a matter of constant and humiliating experience. Doubts and fears too, misgivings about Christ's willingness, and mistaken ideas about his own fitness, trouble his soul and hedge him round with difficulties, that he fears he shall never find peace at all; and all the way through, even when he has found Christ and obtained mercy in Him, there is not a day he lives, nor a step he takes

heavenward, but he finds himself hindered and mortified by the indwelling of sin and the plague of his own heart.

Then, *the world* in which he lives adds immensely to the Christian's conduct. Some have to contend fiercely with things forbidden: the flesh spreads its enticements; the eye is tempted by vanity; the course of daily life presents a series of allurements fitted to gratify a carnal mind.

Treading this dangerous ground, the Christian must watch and pray with unceasing diligence lest he enter into temptation.

Or it may not be with the world's vanities that the believer is set to contend, so much as against its *hatred and persecuting spirit*; just as Satan first accosted the Lord with the temptations of the wilderness, and failing in these, assailed Him by the malice of the Pharisees and the terrors of death. This was the trial of the Christians at Smyrna. Satan had cast some of them into prison, to try whether hunger and thirst, darkness and chains, would be effectual to break their courage and tempt them to renounce their faith in Christ. But even trials like these are only for a short and definite season. Their days of tribulation are limited to "ten." So exactly the Lord assigns the duration of his people's sufferings, that He appoints even the time and place where their enemies may assault: "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further."

What particular mode of conflict the new convert will have to meet, and the position to be assigned to him in the great battle-field with evil, no one can foresee. But sin is, ever and everywhere, the grand enemy which, in some form or other, he must meet as one warrior meets his antagonist face to face. There is an obvious difference in this conflict between the Christian and the man of the world. Sin lives in the Christian, while the worldly man lives in sin. Both may contend with it, but in a different spirit and with different results. The Christian overcomes sin, but sin overcomes the worldly man; with him it is ever a losing game; he has no power to fight; his half-hearted struggles with sin are but a succession of defeats; whereas the Christian, regarding sin with deep and righteous abhorrence, is animated in his conflicts by the conscious presence of his great Captain, who inspires him to bolder deeds. He ever seeks to emulate their brave exploits, and share their success, who “overcame by the blood of the Lamb.”

But in this great life-conflict, the Christian soldier must be “*faithful*.” Faith is the master principle in the soldier of Christ; faithfulness is the character which that principle produces. Faith is the ruling power which controls, informs, pervades his everyday actions. Faith brings unseen and eternal things near, and keeps them before him; he realizes the power and presence of the world to come



every hour of his life. True, he cannot see the glories of that world. His eye is too feeble to discern the glitter of their crowns, and his ear too dull to catch the distant music of their harps; but they are all present to his mind as if he actually saw and heard them with his bodily sense.

Invisible, yet by faith he beholds them; future, yet to his conscious faith they are verily present. He is persuaded of them, and embraces them --

“His treasure and his heart are there,  
And his abiding home.”

Now, place that man of faith among the vain pomps and diversified evils of the world, and how will he act? He sees others eagerly pursuing earthly things, “seeking their gain from their quarter;” some grovel among the sordid things of the world, others flutter after its follies; some aspire to wealth, others are greedy for power, while pleasure has everywhere her crowd of wanton admirers. But to the man of faith all such attractions have lost their charm. He can turn away from them all, saying with the Apostle -- “None of these things move me.”

He is equally unmoved in his endurance of trial. In whatever form the trial comes, whether in the scorn of an infidel persecutor, as Abel found it, or the derision of a world sunk in grossness and sense, as Noah experienced; or

the going out from kindred and home with no guide but God, and no home but heaven, as Abraham: still, amid the changes of life and the varied devices of evil, he never loses that principle of faith which brings God near and keeps eternal things in view, and he goes on, through change and grief and joy, steadfast in faith, suffering all, fulfilling all, awaiting all, knowing that he has in heaven a better, that is, an enduring inheritance.

Then, moreover, *his character is moulded by faith*. He is a steward in God's household, and is required to be found faithful. Feeling his responsibility, he takes an accurate account of the talents committed to his stewardship -- his powers of mind and body, his time and strength, his property and position, his social relationships enlarging his sphere of influence, his religious advantages, with full liberty of conscience as to creed and worship, gifted too as to the ministry with purity of doctrine and simplicity of service, while many around have neither; but above all, he has the atoning virtue of the Saviour's blood, the striving and guidance of the Blessed Spirit, the teaching of his inspired Word, the bright example of many living saints, and the blessed memory of others who have finished their course and entered into rest. In his employment of these and numberless other helps committed to his stewardship, he must be faithful. Some may gain more by their talents than others; some seeds may yield sixty or a hundred fold,

others but thirty. We are not responsible for the amount of visible success. Let your own personal salvation be the first thing. Seek first the kingdom of God yourself. Lay the foundation in repentance towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as your peace and righteousness before God; then seek to gain deeper knowledge of the mysteries of God's eternal salvation, a maturer experience of its blessings and hopes, and diligent obedience to its precepts. Thus you will fulfil the first duties of a faithful steward in receiving *for yourself* the full salvation of Christ.

Then see that you *live for others*. Fulfil your character as a witness for Christ. Live and move as a lamp in a dark place, diffusing the light of life, and always guiding some inquirer or other into the way of peace. Spend your days as a labourer sent by the great Master to work in his vineyard. The time is short, and much remains to be done. Ignorant wanderers in the world's highway are to be brought in and instructed; mourners, stricken for sin and weeping with godly sorrow, to be directed to Christ; and many an awakened penitent, anxious about eternal things, wants a friendly hand to lead him to the Father's way of peace. Thus the Christian lives daily under the solemn impression of his stewardship. Life, with all its comforts, helps, privileges, is a great responsibility. His one great purpose, pursued with many defects and frequent discouragement, is to be found faithful; not self-seeking, not coveting praise or

power or gain, but to be “faithful;” not self-indulgent, indolent, or supine, but “faithful;” not seeking to please men, or to obtain their commendation, but to obtain the approval of the Lord Himself in that great day -- “Well done, good and faithful servant.”

*But count the cost.* It is very easy to sail in smooth waters, fanned along by gentle breezes and charmed by bright skies of azure and gold; but when the heavens gather blackness and waves swell mountains high, when the masts are shivered in sunder and sails rent to pieces, strong men look at each other with dismay, and fill the air with desponding cries for deliverance. Sailing is difficult in these rough waters of life. Still, faithfulness to Christ takes no account of perils. It rests with Him to appoint in what way your faith is to be tried. If little is given and little duties are assigned you, be faithful in little things. If your lot be fixed in perilous times, and fidelity to your Divine Master demands stern sacrifices, “add to your faith virtue;” strengthened with all might by the Spirit in the inner man, let your courage rise with your dangers. If it were so that things must be surrendered which men hold dear, if ease or fortune, if name or wealth, if friends or kindred, if home and country, yea if life itself be demanded as the test of your fidelity, let not the terror of that scene, or the costliness of the sacrifice, make you flinch, but be willing to surrender yourselves to the darkness of a dungeon, and to join the

noble army of martyrs, rather than forsake your Master and deny the faith. “For whosoever will save his life for my sake, the same shall save it.”

*Such fidelity is richly requited:* “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” The recompense of the believer is said to be a crown. St. Paul designates it “a crown of righteousness;” St. Peter, “a crown of glory;” Isaiah, “a crown of beauty;” and St. James, as here, “a crown of life.” The crown promised is rather that emblem of supreme power which sits upon the heads of kings, than the chaplet of bright but perishing flowers that sometimes lends a fading glory to the conqueror’s brow.

Yet it is no crown of gold such as earthly monarchs wear, brilliant and costly, but still a short-lived and unenviable distinction; the crown of life sheds an immortal glory around the brow that wears it. Earthly crowns often sit heavily on the monarch’s head: --

“O polished perturbation! golden care,  
That keeps the ports of slumber open wide  
To many a watchful night.”

But this crown confers the dignity of empire without its care, and the grandeur of royalty divested of its perils. Other kingdoms must decay, and the crowns fall, or at least the head that wears them must slumber in the grave; but the crown of life is the emblem of that kingdom which

cannot be moved -- its glory is unfading as the inheritance to which it belongs.

*But the value of the gift is enhanced by the giver.* In the near prospect of his great prize, St. Paul anticipated with adoring satisfaction, that as soon as he had finished his course, his Divine Master would summon him to his immediate presence, and with his own hands place the crown upon his faithful brow. None has such perfect knowledge of us, and the good fight we have fought, as He. He taught our hands to fight, appointed our post of conflict; when weary with long warfare, He encouraged our fainting spirits, and “having done all,” enabled us to “stand” against our enemies. And now, our warfare ended, He calls us to his feet; not just to receive some slight token of commendation, or to be rewarded by a smile, though this were requital enough for a life of toil and conflict, but to stand forth surrounded by an innumerable company of angels, and the general assembly and church of the first-born, to hear the immortal King himself proclaim that this man, and that, whose names He confesses before the Father, are among the called and faithful and chosen whom He accounts worthy of that kingdom.

All this seems incredible. For what have the best of his people done for Him, that they should be received with such distinction as this? True, they earnestly desire to serve Him. Nothing is dearer to their heart than that name which

is above every name; to glorify Him on earth has been the great business of their lives. But now to be called to his presence and receive such marks of honour, --

“Make slaves the partners of his throne,  
And deck them with a glorious crown,”

Lord! this is too much! Were we just permitted to enter those pearly gates and occupy the lowest place among the least in the kingdom of heaven -- just to escape, as it were “so as by fire,” the due reward of our deeds -- this were unmerited goodness ever to be gratefully remembered. But that Thou shouldst reserve for us a crown of life unfading and eternal, and, with thine own blessed hands still bearing the print of the nails, place it on our unworthy brows, designating our poor services as betokening good and faithful servants, Oh! what incredible condescension is this!

It is all true. God’s people strive sincerely to serve and please Him. This is the one aim and effort of their daily life; “whether they live, they live unto the Lord.” They bless God from the heart that He gave them the desire, and power to bring that desire to good effect. But the idea of receiving any recompense, as if their services merited any reward, this never entered their minds. They have done good, following the example of their Lord, but their memory retains no recollection of services done for Christ which

deserve any mention there. “Lord,” they ask, as it were, bewildered and surprised, as in the twenty-fifth of Matthew, “when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When we saw thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?” True, we would have done all this; it was in our heart to do it, and more a thousand times; for what do we not owe to Thee? It was thy grace first inclined our hearts; we have loved Thee, but Thou first lovedst us; Thou deignest to call us faithful, but it was thy grace that made us faithful and kept us safe. We only gave Thee back thine own. This crown, and all the felicities of thy kingdom, we ascribe for ever to the praise of the glory of thy grace!

In all human competitions, the success of one insures the defeat and disappointment of another. But there are no such envious results among spirits made perfect before the throne. Our obtaining the crown will not involve any loss or privation to others. No matter how many competitors may contend for the prize -- no matter if others distinguished by greater gifts, or higher privileges than we, achieve greater things. It is faithfulness to what is committed to us that carries off the prize. If a husband and father fulfil the will of God amid the anxieties and temptations of a sinful world, and rule his household well, such fidelity will receive the crown. If the wife and mother be faithful to her calling,



appointed it may be to patient suffering as well as to active service, her crown is equally sure. And so even with children. God's people vary in their positions and gifts, their conflicts and duties. Some receive much, others but little; some stand prominently before the world, others are concealed in the unobtrusiveness of private life. But the question is not where we are, or what we have, but are we faithfully fulfilling the will of God with steadfast and immovable purpose in that state of life where He places use. Now, the church is militant, and every member is pledged to fight manfully against the world, the flesh and the devil, and continue Christ's faithful soldier to his life's end. The struggles of active warfare meet us on every side -- "the battle of the warrior and the garments rolled in blood." Some are harassed by temptation; others groan under their weary burdens; while many are wounded and sore broken. See them in their chambers alone with God: --

"Their couch is wet with tears,  
They wrestle hard, as we do now,  
With sins and doubts and fears."

But in a little time these things will all have passed away. These same persons will then be gathered around the throne of the great King, clad in robes of victory, and wearing their crowns of life; no enemy henceforth disturbs their repose, nor sin defiles the soul; no tears or sorrow

dims the brightness of their faces; they have finished their courses, they have kept the faith; they have obtained joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing are fled away. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

-- W.B. MACKENZIE, M.A.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

OF TWO PRISONERS' DREAMS, AND WHAT CAME OF THEM.

I AM now going on to tell you how the strange dreams which Joseph had when a boy were yet to be made good, and how his being sold for a slave, and lied on, and cast into prison, was just God's way of bringing it about that his brethren should bow before him. Not, certainly, that God approved these bad things that were done to him, but he allowed them. He did not say to his brothers and to Potiphar that they were to do what they did, but he let them do it, that he might show more fully his own truth, and power, and grace. Just as, in a far greater case, he let the wicked Jews and others put Christ to death, that he might

raise him from the dead and give him glory, that our faith and hope might be in God.

A good man conducts himself rightly in every situation. So Joseph, being a prisoner, behaved so well and wisely that the jailer soon found him worthy of trust, and a great help to him in the management of the prison. Perhaps he had come to know that it was not for crime that Joseph was sent there. He was aware that in those days people who had done no wrong were often put in prison, from whim or rage, without cause. So, finding this Hebrew slave to be a very true, good man, he gave him the care of the whole prison. And every thing went well under his hand, for the Lord was with him, and prospered him. The jail in which Joseph was confined was the king's prison, to which offenders against Pharaoh were sent. So it happened that two persons that had given him offence were committed to jail while Joseph was there -- the chief butler of the court and the chief baker. Of course they came under Joseph's charge, and he took care of them. Now one morning when he went into them, he saw them both looking very troubled, as if something sad had happened to them. He asked what was the matter, and they said that they had both dreamed a strange dream the night before, and there was no one to tell them the meaning of it. If they had been still in the king's house, they would have sent for some magician or soothsayer, and asked him to tell them, but here in the

prison what could they do? When Joseph heard this, he said that God alone who was everywhere could explain these things, and he asked them to tell him what they had dreamed about. He felt that God would show him what was meant. So the butler began, and told him that he had dreamed he saw a vine before him, which had three branches; and as he looked it began to blossom, and then three clusters began to form, and to ripen, till they hung ready for pressing. (Things, you know, go on very rapidly in dreams.) Then, said the butler, having the king's cup in my hand, I plucked the grapes, and pressed them into the cup, and went and gave it into the royal hand, just as I was wont to do. Joseph said that was a good dream -- that the three branches of the vine were three days, and as for the rest, it meant that within time, he would be taken back into his place again, and be chief butler as before. You may be sure the dreamer was very glad to hear this, and would not be displeased when Joseph added, When you go back to your place, think kindly of me, and ask the king to take me out of this prison. I belong to another country, and was stolen away from my home among the Hebrews, and while I have been here I have done no one wrong, that I should deserve to be cast into this dungeon. Surely the chief butler would promise to be Joseph's friend, on hearing his story, and getting God's word through him. I have no doubt he did, and that at the same time he intended to speak to the

king, he was so glad to hear that Pharaoh was to take him back again to his old situation. The chief baker was glad to find so good an interpretation given of the other's dream, and began to tell his own. He said, I dreamed that I had three white baskets on my head, full of all nice bake-meats for the king: but as I was carrying them along, the birds came flocking round about me, and ate them out of the baskets. The Joseph told him that the dream was sad and solemn, for it meant that in three days Pharaoh would hang him on a tree and leave him to be pecked at and eaten by the fowls of the air. Both these things happened exactly as Joseph foretold. For on the third day from the time of this conversation, King Pharaoh made a great feast to his servants, and sent for both the prisoners who had lately displeased him. They were brought into the palace, and allowed to take their places among the other servants; and perhaps, at first, the baker would begin to hope that the interpretation of his dream had been wrongly given, and would not prove true. If so, it would be a terrible shock to him to find public sentence given, to take him forth to death, while his companion in the prison was to be restored to his office. But this was what the king did -- he bade the chief butler take his old place, and commanded the chief baker to be hanged, just as Joseph said.

And now, you would be ready to say, the prison-doors will soon be set open to let Joseph go free. The butler will

take an early opportunity of speaking to the king; he will tell him about the dream he had; how a Hebrew youth had interpreted it to him quite truly, and how he had told him that he had been stolen from his own country, and unjustly treated here. He will not rest till he repays Joseph's kindness by getting him brought out of prison. But it was not so. After being restored to his place, the butler forgets all about it, or did not like to take trouble for a stranger. Perhaps he began to excuse himself for doing nothing, by trying to believe that he was not much indebted to Joseph after all. I daresay, however, he just delayed at first, and then forgot. He came after a while to confess his fault in this; but it required that God should send other dreams to wake him up to the remembrance of it. These were sent, however, not to the butler, but to the king himself. They were so striking, and so much came out of them, that I must make them the subject of another story, to find room for a full account.

In the meantime, I would like to ask you to think of two lessons which the events now related teach us. The first is, always to be careful to do what is right, and to be useful, in the humblest place. Never think anything is too little to be done well. Never think that any situation is too mean for anything to come of faithfulness to its duties. This, at least, will always come of it -- your character will grow; and very often, this will come of it, that in God's providence you will

be asked to step up higher. It will be so, if not in this life, yet in the next world, if duty be done as to Christ. In trials, too, do not sit down in despair, but up and make the best you can out of it. You see how it was with Joseph; he did not, when thrown into prison, spend his time in moans and tears. He made himself useful, proved himself faithful, got a charge, had an opportunity of doing a kindness and of showing that the Spirit of God was with him, and all this led him at length to great honour and power. The other lesson I wish you to think of is one of thankfulness for the freedom and security of our times and country. Our good queen has it not in her heart to deal with her servants as Pharaoh did with his; but even if she had, she could not do anything against the laws. She governs according to the laws; and they are such as to protect the person and freedom of the meanest, unless they should be guilty of real crime, which we do not know that Pharaoh's servants were. Pray for your country, then, and for your queen, and thank God for a land so free, and a reign so just.

-----

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Can you give me an example of very wrong things in the history of Jacob, which God allowed, and made to bring about his own purposes?

2. Can you give examples of other persons than Joseph who were imprisoned without fault?

3. Can you mention a lady that had a very painful dream, and was in much trouble about it?

4. Do you remember an instance of two persons who were, like the butler and the baker, placed in the same circumstances, and of whom also “one” was “taken and the other left?”

5. Do you know the name of another royal cup-bearer?

6. Can you name a person who was put to death after he supposed that he was to escape?

7. Can you name instances of ingratitude, in a son, in a king, in a people?

ANSWERS will be found by consulting Gen. xxvii.;

Matt. xiv.; Acts iv., xii., xvi.; Matt. xxvii.; Luke xxiii.;

Neh. i; 1 Sam. xv.; 2 Sam. xv., 2 Chron. xxiv., Ps.

lxxviii. Other passages will furnish answers to some of the questions.

-----



## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE LESSON.

1. How do we come to know that there shall be a resurrection of the dead?

2. How will the bodies in which believers are raised differ in many important respects from those which were laid in the grave? 1 Cor. xv. 42-44.

3. When shall the power of death be completely put down?

4. Through whom do believers obtain the victory over the last enemy?

-----

### *PRAYER.*

O LORD, who in thy wise and holy providence dost order our lot in life, teach us, in whatever condition we are to be content therewith, not repining nor envying. When we are in trouble help us to be patient, asking Thee to deliver us, but waiting Thy will. Whatever place of duty we fill make us faithful. Make us diligent, useful, true now, at school, at home, wherever we are, that we may be good and brave workers when we grow older. Lord, bless our native land, and make it to abound in righteous men, more and more.

Save and prosper our beloved Queen, for whose rule we give thee thanks; and bless all her house. These things we ask for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

-----

## EVENING WORSHIP.

O HOLY and blessed Spirit, inspire us with wisdom, knowledge, spiritual understanding, and such a holy faith as may ever work by love to God and man. Glorify the Son to us and in us, that we may by all we are and do through Him glorify the Father. Shed abroad the love of God in our hearts. Enable us to mortify the deeds of the flesh, that we may live. Lead us into all truth and holiness, that so we may enjoy Thy peace and comfort for evermore. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm lxxviii. 32-35.*

Long as I live I'll bless thy name,  
My King, my God of love!  
My work and joy shall be the same  
In the right world above.

Great is the Lord, his power unknown,  
And let his praise be great;  
I'll sing the honours of thy throne,  
Thy works of grace repeat.

Thy grace shall dwell upon my tongue,  
And, while my lips rejoice,  
Thy saints shall hear the sacred song,  
And join their cheerful voice.

Fathers to sons shall teach thy name,  
And children learn thy ways;  
Ages to come thy truth proclaim,  
And nations sound thy praise.

#### MATTHEW XXII. 29-32.

JESUS answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of god. 30. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. 31. But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, 32. I am the God of

Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

## 1 CORINTHIANS XV. 42-57.

SO also is the resurrection of the dead; it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption: 43. It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. 44. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. 45. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. 46. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. 47. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. 48. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. 49. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. 50. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption, 51. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. 52. in the twinkling of an eye, at the last

trump, (for the trumpet shall sound;) and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. 55. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? 56. The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. 5. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

#### 1 THESSALONIANS IV. 13-18.

**BUT** I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. 14. For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 15. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. 16. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise

first: 17. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 18. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

-----

*Prayer.*

O MOST holy and gracious Lord, who of Thy goodness hast granted us the privileges of another Sabbath, we desire now to review this sacred day as in Thy presence, to whom all hearts are open. We confess, O Lord, that even our holy duties yield abundant matter for humiliation and sorrow. Pardon, we beseech Thee, whatever Thou hast seen amiss in us or our services this day -- the dulness of our hearts -- our ignorance in not understanding Thy truth, and unwillingness to receive it -- our want of reverence, love, and gratitude. Deepen our repentance, strengthen our faith, and may we worship Thee in spirit and in truth. Forgive every thought, word, or action by which we have grieved Thy spirit or dishonoured Thy holy name. Cleanse us from all sin, through the atoning blood of Christ. Give us the comfort of Thy pardoning love, and assure us of Thy favour, before we close our eyes in sleep.

Dispose us to meditate on the truths of Thy gospel with self-application and fervent prayer; may we become more spiritual in mind, established in faith and hope -- our affections more set on things above, and our will more submissively obedient to Thy will. May we carry the instructions of Thy word and the savour of Thy holy worship into the duties and events of the ensuing week. Teach us to be wise and circumspect, arm us against temptation, and order our goings in Thy ways, that our footsteps slip not.

Prosper the labours of Thy servants who have sought to make Christ known as the almighty and all-sufficient Saviour of sinners. May Thy people be edified in the faith, and sinners in great numbers be converted to Thee. Hear the supplications presented before Thee this day, and may they return in abundant blessings on Thy church and the world. May Thy truth everywhere spread and prevail. Check the growth of false doctrine, frustrate every attempt to promote infidelity and sin, and may the blessings of Thy salvation more and more abound.

We commend ourselves to Thy guardianship this night. Give us the assurance of Thy protecting care, and the comfort of refreshing sleep. May our days and weeks be thus continued and ended in Thee. And may we who now unite in prayer, and enjoy Sabbath-day fellowship with Thee and Thy people on earth, meet at length before Thy

throne, and dwell with Thee in Thy everlasting kingdom.  
Grant this, O Lord, through Jesus Christ our Mediator and  
Redeemer. *Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

*Morning.*

**Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace:  
thereby good shall come unto thee.**

Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth, and lay  
up his words in thine heart.

If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up,  
thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles.

For then shalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty,  
and shalt lift up thy face unto God.

Thou shalt make thy prayer unto him, and he shall hear  
thee, and thou shalt pay thy vows.

Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be  
established unto thee; and the light shall shine upon thy  
ways.

Job xxii. 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, 28.



*Evening.*

**Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.**

Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass:

And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon-day.

Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.

When I said, My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O Lord, held me up.

In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul.

Ps. xxxvii. 4, 5, 6, 7.      Ps. xciv. 18, 19.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**So they did eat, and were filled, and became fat, and delighted themselves in thy great goodness.**

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful:

But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season: his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Neh. ix. 25.      Ps. i. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6.

*Evening.*

**Praise ye the Lord. Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, that delighteth greatly in his commandments.**

His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed.

Wealth and riches shall be in his house; and his righteousness endureth for ever.

Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: he is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous.

A good man soweth favour and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion.

Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.

Ps. cxii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

## WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments.**

Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

Blessed art thou, O Lord! teach me thy statutes.

With my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth.

I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways.

I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word.

Ps. cxix. 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16.

*Evening.*

**I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.**

Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts.

But who may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appeareth? For he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap.

Song ii. 3.

Mal. iii. 1, 2.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**Thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel.**

When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them.

I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water.

I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah-tree, and the myrtle, and the oil-tree; I will set in the desert the fir-tree, and the pine, and the box-tree together;

That they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it.

Isa. xl. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20.

*Evening.*

**The righteous shall be glad in the Lord, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory.**

The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot.

The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.

I will bless the Lord, who hath given me counsel; my reins also instruct me in the night-seasons.

I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope:

Ps. lxiv. 10.    Ps. xvi. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.**

And ye now therefore have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.

And in that day ye shall ask me nothing Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.

Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.

1 Cor. i. 31.    John xvi. 22, 23, 24, 27.

*Evening.*

**Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:**

Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.

For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

And not only so, but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

1 Peter i. 8, 9.    Rom. v. 10, 11.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.**

Serve the Lord with gladness; come before his presence with singing.

Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Zion: and unto thee shall the vow be performed.

O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come.

Iniquities prevail against me: as for our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away.

Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts.

Ps. c. 1, 2, 3. Ps. lxxv. 1, 2, 3, 4.

*Evening.*

**Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy.**

If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words:

Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father.

Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting.

Deut. v. 8.    Isa. lviii. 13, 14.    Ps. c. 4, 5.



# HOME PREACHER, OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

## ELEVENTH WEEK.

### MORNING WORSHIP.

Have mercy on us, O God, for we are miserable offenders. Forgive our enmity to Thee; our irreverent sense of Thy presence; our unbelief in Thy love, Thy will, and Thy word; our contempt for Thine authority; our breach of all Thy commandments; our envy, malice, and uncharitableness; the innumerable sins of our tongue; our covetousness, pride, and vanity; our sinful procrastination, idleness, and neglect of many talents; our sins of temper and of speech, in private and in public; the evil we have done and the good left undone to those who are living and to those who have gone to their account. Father, forgive us for the sake of Him who was a propitiation for the sins of the world. *Amen.*

### HYMN, or *Psalm cxlvii. 1-7.*

Ye humble souls, approach your God  
With songs of sacred praise;  
For He is good, supremely good,  
And kind are all his ways.

All nature owns his guardian care;  
In Him we live and move:  
But nobler benefits declare  
The wonders of his love.

He gave his Son, his only Son,  
To ransom rebel worms;  
'Tis here he makes his goodness known  
In its diviner forms.

To this sure refuge, Lord, we come,  
'Tis here our hope relies;  
A safe defence, a peaceful home,  
When storms and troubles rise.

Thine eye beholds, with kind regard,  
The souls who trust in Thee;  
Their humble hope Thou wilt reward  
With bliss divinely free.

Great God, to Thy unchanging love  
What honours shall we raise?  
Not all the raptured songs above  
Can render equal praise.

## EXODUS II. 1-10.

And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi. 2 And the woman conceived, and bare a son: and when she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months. 3. And when she could no longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid it in the flags by the river's brink. 4. And his sister stood afar off, to wit what would be done to him. 5. And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself at the river; and her maidens walked along by the river's side: and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it. 6. And when she had opened it, she saw the child: and, behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, This is one of the Hebrews' children. 7. Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee? 8. And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, go. And the maid went and called the child's mother. 9. And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages. And the woman took the child and nursed it. 10. And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called

his name Moses: and she said, Because I drew him out of the water.

## HEBREWS XI. 23-29.

By faith, Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment. 24. By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; 25. Choosing rather to suffer afflictions with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; 26. Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. 27. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. 28. Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the first-born should touch them. 29. By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land; which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.

-----

## *Prayer.*

GREAT art Thou, O Lord, and greatly to be revered. Good art Thou also, and much to be loved and trusted. We bless Thee for bringing us to the light of a new day, even a new day of the Son of Man. In everything we would give thanks. We praise Thee for thy goodness to us the whole of our past lives. The blessings received have been altogether unmerited on our part: and as to any crosses and disappointments with which we have been visited, we acknowledge that they are less than we deserve--in the midst of deserved wrath the Lord hath remembered mercy. We thank Thee specially for thy mercies towards us during the past week. Every week, every day, has been bringing us new tokens of thy love: O that it were adding to our gratitude and affection. Every week, every day, that passes away is bringing us so much nearer to that awful moment when we must leave this world: O that we were growing in grace as we grow in days and in years. We would remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy: may it be a day of spiritual improvement, and of rest to our souls. Draw nigh to us while we draw nigh to Thee. Meet with us as now gathered around the family altar; meet with us in our private devotions and meditations; meet with us in the worshipping assembly of thy people; and bless the word,

read and heard, to us and to others. Keep us from worldly thoughts; turn away our eyes from beholding vanity, and quicken Thou us in thy way. Fill our hearts with love to Thee and love to all mankind. We acknowledge that we ought to love Thee. We confess our past sins and present unworthiness, and we mourn over the alienation of our minds from Thee. O Lord, let us not remain at a distance from Thee. Draw us nigh, and keep us nigh, by the peace-speaking blood of Thine own Son. May thy Spirit be dealing with our spirits so as to draw and incline our hearts to Thee and thy statutes. Give us a view of the King in his beauty to allure and ravish and fix our hearts, so that we may be enabled to say, “My heart is fixed, my heart is fixed;” “whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides Thee.” O that we could love Thee as we ought to love Thee. O that we could love Thee in some measure corresponding to thy love to us. O that we could love Thee with all our hearts. Thou art Light and the Fountain of Lights: may the light that is in Thee shine upon us. Wherein we are in darkness do Thou enlighten us; wherein we err do Thou show us the truth; wherein we are backsliding do Thou rebuke us; wherein we have sinned in time past we would do so no more. All that we ask is for Christ’s sake. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O THOU whose power is omnipotent, whose grace never faileth, and who hast compassion upon all who seek Thee, grant in Thine infinite mercy that we who are by nature children of disobedience and wrath may never presume on Thy goodness, nor distrust Thy love, nor rely on ourselves, nor grieve Thy Spirit, but by holy resolution, believing prayer, and constant endeavour, make our calling and election sure, and that, living to the Spirit, we may in bliss reap perfect holiness and everlasting life, through Jesus Christ, our only Saviour. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm cxlvi. 1-6.*

JOIN, all who love the Saviour's name,  
To sing his everlasting fame:  
Great God! Prepare each heart and voice,  
In Him for ever to rejoice.

What wondrous things of him are told!  
In him what glories I behold!  
All things for him I gladly leave;  
To him, my soul, for ever cleave.

In him my treasure's all contain'd;  
By him my feeble soul's sustain'd;  
From him what favours I receive!  
Through him I shall for ever live.

Bless him, my soul, from day to day;  
Trust him to lead thee on thy way;  
Take him for strength and righteousness,  
Make him thy refuge in distress.

To him commit thy every care,  
All anxious doubting thoughts forbear;  
Love him above all earthly bliss,  
And him in all thy ways confess.

To him your highest praise belongs,  
Praise him in cheerful grateful songs:  
Thus for the work of heaven prepare;  
For Him you'll sing for ever there.

-----



## LUKE XVIII. 9-14.

And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others. 10. Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. 11. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. 12. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. 13. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. 14. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

## ACTS IX. 1-20.

AND Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, 2. And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogue, that if he found any of this way, whether they

were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. 3. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: 4. And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? 5. And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest. It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. 6. And he, trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. 7. And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. 8. And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. 9. And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink. 10. And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. 11. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus: for behold, he prayeth, 12. And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight. 13. Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem; 14. And

here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. 15. But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel. 16. For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. 17. And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him, said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. 18. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales; and he received sight forthwith, and arose and was baptized. 19. And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus. 20. And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.

-----

## SERMON XI.

“UNTO ME WHO AM LESS THAN THE LEAST OF ALL SAINTS.”

-- Eph. iii. 8.

PAUL is acknowledged on all hands to be one of the greatest of all saints. How then does he come to speak of himself -- "I am the least of the apostles, and not worthy to be called an apostle," and "I am less than the least of all saints?" The inquiry is worthy of being prosecuted, with the view not only of exhibiting the character of the apostle, but more especially of illustrating some of the lowest, and yet the highest graces, of the Christian character. We must take into account --

I. *The Apostle remembered his past sin.* -- Wherever there is a quickened conscience it will prompt the possessor to think of his past sins, and this even when he has reason to believe that they have been forgiven. The apostle continued to remember the natural and deeply seated pride and self-righteousness which he had so long cherished. Allusion is made to the circumstances of his once having been an enemy of the cross of Christ and a persecutor, in every one of his public apologies, and a number of his Epistles. In a letter to Timothy, written thirty years after his conversion, he speaks of his acts of enmity against the cause of God, as if they had been committed the day before, so fresh are they in his memory: "I thank Jesus Christ our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting into the ministry, who was before a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious."

Let us try ourselves by this test. When our minds wander back among the scenes and incidents of our past life, what are the recollections which we seek to bring up and delight to cherish? Do we think on our ingratitude for favours conferred by God, on our selfishness and ungodliness? Or do we rather call up our imagined virtues, our supposed achievements? Do we fondly dwell on the compliments which have been paid us, and the honours which have been heaped upon us, and all to enable us to feed our self-esteem, and to raise a hymn of praise to our own virtues? If such be our spirit and habit, it is all too certain that we have not acquired the temper to which Paul was brought when his pride was cast down on the road to Damascus, and which he ever afterwards entertained.

It is for the benefit of the believer to remember his past sinfulness. The recollection of his infirmities, may enable him to guard against their recurrence. Our sins, even when past and forgiven, are apt to leave a prejudicial influence behind. The habits that have been formed will be apt to impel us in our old ways. Passions and lusts which have been fondled will seek to regain their former ascendancy. Even when these effects do not follow, there is the scandal of the offence in the eyes of man. Our sins are like wounds, which even when cured and closed, leave a scar behind. It is most meet and becoming, and in every respect for his own profit and the advantage of the church and world, that the

sinner, and more particularly the man whose sin has been known, should walk humbly before God and his fellow-man all the days of his life.

Nor let it be forgotten that the remembrance of past sin is one of the motives impelling the Christian to be “zealously affected in a good thing.” “Simon,” said our Lord to a Pharisee, “I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. There was a certain creditor which had two debtors; the one owed five hundred pence and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose he to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, thou hast rightly judged.” Now the principle which our Lord thus drew from the mouth of the unconverted Pharisee, was one on which Paul had acted since his conversion. He loved much, since much had been forgiven him. The remembrance of the injury he had done to the church, stimulated him to make greater endeavours to benefit it; the persecutions which he had inflicted on others made him more steadfast in bearing the sufferings to which he was now exposed. According to the account handed down from the early church, the apostle had to suffer a violent death in the reign of Nero, when Christians were covered with pitch and burned as torches, or clothed with the skin of wild beasts, and dogs let loose upon them. We can conceive that

as he saw the terrible preparations for putting him to death, his memory would go back a period of thirty years, and he would remember how he himself had stood by and consented to the death of the holy martyr Stephen; and he would feel himself thereby the more strengthened to endure what the Lord was now pleased to lay upon him.

II. *The Apostle mourned over the sin yet cleaving to him.* -- He had not only a recollection of past sin, he had a sense of present sin: “I see another law in my members warring against the law of sin, which is in my members. O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”

The discovery of remaining sin is a mark of the true believer. The statement may sound paradoxical, but the believer grieves far more over his lesser infirmities than others do over their greater. Nor is it difficult to account for this. The Spirit of God in renewing the soul has quickened the conscience, which more clearly discovers the remaining evil in the heart and conduct, and is more disposed to tremble at God’s word. Thus sin is far more frequently observed, and is immeasurably more abhorred, by one who is striving after holiness, than by the man who is allowing himself in iniquity; the hatred of sin, and the power of discerning sin, increase with the Christian’s spiritual excellence; and thus it is that in growing in other graces he grows in the grace of humility also, resembling

the tree which, in proportion as it shoots out branches and leaves towards heaven, sends down deeper roots into the soil to keep it stable in the midst of the storms that beat upon it. While the man of this world is commonly disposed to justify and commend himself, the genuine disciple is prepared to acknowledge that he is less than the least of all saints.

This sense of indwelling sin is one of the elements that conduce to the onward progress of the believer. Why is it that so many professing Christians, ay and too many true Christians, are not advancing in the spiritual life? are the same this sabbath as they were the previous sabbath, the same this year as they were the last year? and to all appearance and unless God arouse them, will be the same next year as they are this? It is because they are contented with themselves and with their condition; they have reached a state of self-complacency -- they have “settled on their lees,” and they do not wish to be disturbed by so much as an allusion to their sin. Very difficult was the temper of the apostle. Conscious of the sin that still adhered to him, he longed to have it completely exterminated, and sought the heavenly aid which might enable him to reach that after which he was always striving -- “unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.”

III. *The Apostle acknowledged God to be the author of all the gifts and graces possessed by him.* Paul on more



than one occasion found it necessary to speak of his gifts. He felt himself called to do so, in a special manner, in writing the second Epistle to the Corinthians. There were individuals in that church who had disparaged the office of the apostle; and he found it proper in these circumstances to vindicate the powers which had been committed to him. But in doing so he feels as if he were going out of his usual way, and as if he had to proffer an excuse -- "Would to God," says he, "ye could bear with me a little in my folly" (2 Cor. xi. 1). And when he follows his train of reflection, he arrests himself to explain that his faults are his own, and to ascribe the glory of his gifts to God -- "If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities:" "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

There may be circumstances requiring us to speak of our attainments in the spiritual life; but there can be no excuse for our thinking of them, or alluding to them, in a spirit of complacency. Of all pride, spiritual pride is the most hateful, and the most lamentably inconsistent. It is absurd enough to be proud of the rank, or wealth, or abilities, which God has given; but it is still more foolish and sinful to boast of spiritual gifts which God bestowed at first, and which would instantly vanish if God did not sustain them. As pride rises, the grace of God departs. The two cannot dwell in one heart, any more than Dagon the god of the Philistines and the ark of the covenant could have a

place in one temple. When we have become proud of them, the graces have already vanished. The graces are no longer graces when they are boasted of. They are so delicate in their nature, that if we but look upon them with an eye of vanity they instantly disappear.

How often does it happen that when persons are suddenly raised to places of honour, they see nothing but their own merits, their own talent, skill, or good management. Elevation of rank thus leads, in too many cases, to an increase of pride and vanity. This is painfully illustrated in the history of Saul, the son of Kish. Setting out in search of his father's asses, he received before he returned a kingdom, for the discharge of the offices of which he had many qualifications. But his rise seems to have fostered the morbid vanity of his mind; and when this was not fed by constant incense -- when the Israelites cried, Saul hath slain his thousands and David his tens of thousands -- it led to envy and revenge which goaded him onto deeds of utter infatuation. How different with Saul of Tarsus! At every step of his elevation in the church he saw the finger of God, and was the more impressed with his own unworthiness. He recognized in every talent possessed by him the gift of God. Does he speak of his apostleship? He explains, that he is called "through the will of God:" Of his labours? "Not I, but the grace of God which was with me:" Of his perseverance? "I can do all things through Christ

who strengtheneth me:” Of his success? “God gave the increase:” Of his general character? “By the grace of God I am what I am.”

IV. *The Apostle took a high standard of excellence.* He took as his model the law of God, and the character of Jesus.

Others take a lower standard, and hence their inferiority. They are contented with themselves when they give to God the mere outward obeisance of the body, or because they pay a general respect to one of the tables of the law, to the neglect of the other. Or they are satisfied with themselves, because they are as reputable as other professing Christians, or as this particular individual who stands high in the church or in the world. “They, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.” Having taken some low standard, and having reached it, they regard themselves with the most perfect satisfaction. Some seem to be positively afraid, lest they should appear to be more concerned about the salvation of their souls or devoted to Christ than their neighbours O! How sad to think that believers, when they look to one another, should do so, with the view of discovering something which may allow them to continue in their present low state of attainment, and that they should join hand in hand not to raise each other, but

rather -- like drowning men -- to drag each other down to even a lower level.

All actual excellence, whether earthly or spiritual, has been attained by the mind keeping before it, and dwelling upon the ideas of the great, the good, the beautiful, the grand, the perfect. The tradesman and the mechanic reach the highest eminence by never allowing themselves to rest till they can produce the most finished specimens of their particular craft. The painter and sculptor travel to distant lands, that they may see, and, as it were, fill their eye and mind with the sight of, the most beautiful models of their arts. Poets have had their yet undiscovered genius wakened into life as they contemplated some of the grandest of nature's scenes; or as they listened to the strains of other poets, the spirit of poetry has descended upon them -- as the spirit of inspiration came upon Elisha while the minstrel played before him. The soldier's spirit has been aroused, more than even by the stirring sound of the war trumpet, by the record of the heroism of other warriors. The fervour of one patriot has been created as he listened to the burning words of another patriot, and many a martyr's zeal has been kindled at the funeral pile of other martyrs. In this way fathers have handed down their virtues to their children, and those who could leave their offspring no other, have in their example left them the very richest legacy; and the deeds of those who perform great achievements live far

longer than those who do them, and go down from one generation to another.

Now the believer has such a model set before him in the law of the Lord, which is “perfect,” which is “holy, just, and good:” and lest he should complain that the law is rather fitted to dazzle him by its excessive rightness, he has a model set before him in the character of Jesus, which, as it were, embodies the law, and exhibits it in the most attractive and encouraging light. “Be ye followers of me,” says Paul, but adds this most important qualification, “even as I also am of Christ.” We may copy others in some things -- we should copy Christ in all. It is pleasant to see the path in which we walk trodden by the footsteps of the flock, but we are to follow the flock only so far as they follow the Shepherd. It is when the believer is looking to Jesus, that by grace he becomes assimilated to Him. It is when looking full into the face of Jesus, that His likeness is impressed unto the soul, as we have seen the image of heaven reflected on the bosom of a tranquil lake spread out beneath it. “We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

Learn (1) *The nature of true humility.* -- We are not to understand by it the bashfulness so becoming in youth, which blushes at the recital of its own praise, and wins our confidence when a bolder and more presuming address could

not command it. We are not even to understand by it that modesty which shrinks from the very appearance of what is unseemly, and would rather be deprived of its rights than give occasion of offence or disturb the peace of any. These are lovely natural graces which may adorn other and higher principles -- as leaves do the fruit -- or conceal the absence of them. But they do not, severally nor together, amount to the spiritual grace of humility. Underneath the bashful look and the modest demeanour, there may be the intensest carnal enmity to God. True humility is a Christian grace and one of the fruits of the Spirit, originating in a deep consciousness of sin past and present, and leading us to discover our nothingness in the view of God, our insufficiency for any thing that is good, and prompting us, as we feel our infirmities, to strive after higher and yet higher attainments.

Learn (2) *The advantages of humility.* -- How much nobler and more exalted than pride, though pride is often recommended by the men of the world as the grand means of prompting to great and noble deeds. Pride looks down on that which is beneath, and being contented, reckons all further exertion unnecessary. Humility, on the other hand, looks up to that which is above, and discovering how far it falls beneath, strives to reach up to it. Pride looks back upon its past deeds, and calculating with nicety what it has done, it commits itself to rest; whereas humility looks to

that which is before, and discovering how much ground remains to be trodden, it is active and vigilant. When pride stops, humility proceeds. Having gained one height, pride looks down with complacency on that which is beneath it; humility looks up to a higher and yet higher elevation. The one keeps us on this earth, which is congenial to its nature; the other directs our eye, and tends to lift us up, to heaven.  
-- James M'Cosh, D.D.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

OF A KING'S DREAMS, AND HOW JOSEPH'S CAME TRUE AT LAST.

FOR two years after the chief butler had been taken back to his situation in the house of Pharaoh, he allowed Joseph to remain in prison, without speaking a word for him. That was a long time, and you will be ready to think that Joseph must have been very unhappy. But people can be happy even in jail, when they have a good conscience with them, like Paul or Silas, or when, like old Mannasseh, they repent, and find God there. For this reason I do not think that Joseph was unhappy, after all. He had a clear conscience, he had also duties to do, and busy hands make the heart light. Then God was with him, and many a time, when

Joseph was ready to get weary, he would speak to God and be comforted. And though the chief butler forgot him, his heavenly Father was remembering him, and preparing his deliverance.

So when God's hour was come, King Pharaoh had, in one night, two very curious dreams. In the first, he thought he was standing on the bank of the river Nile -- on the river, on the overflowing of which, yearly, depended the harvests of Egypt; for no rain falls in Egypt, and the fields can only be watered by the swelling and spreading of the river. Standing, then, in his dream by the brink of the Nile, King Pharaoh thought he saw seven cows come up out of the water, fat, sleek, and well to do, and they went into a meadow near by, and began to feed on the grass. Then there came up out of the river as many cattle more; but this last seven were lean, ugly, starved creatures, and following the first fat drove into the meadow, they ate them up. But what seemed strangest of all, after the lean cattle had swallowed the fat ones, they looked as thin, and lank, and miserable as ever. Wondering at this, Pharaoh awoke. Then he fell asleep again, and had another dream. This time he thought he saw a stalk of corn grow up, with seven ears of grain on it, plump and ripe, and heavy. After that another stalk, with the same number of ears, grew up -- but such ears! So thin, withered, and chaff-like, as if the east winds had been pinching them all their life. Then, just like



the lean cattle in the first dream, the thin ears gobbled up the full ones. Whereupon the king awoke.

You cannot wonder that having had two such peculiar dreams, Pharaoh was troubled in the morning. Now in Egypt, in those times, there were persons who professed to be very wise, and to be able to explain dreams and strange occurrences, and to tell what was to happen from them. So the king sent for all of them that were about the city, where the court was; and having told them his dreams, he asked them to tell him what they meant. But not a man of them all was able to say a word about them. One is apt to wonder that they did not trump up some interpretation or other, but, I suppose, the hand of God was on them for his own wise end, and they were not allowed to frame any lies on the matter. When all, therefore, were at a loss, and the whole court was in commotion, the chief butler stepped forward and said to the king, I am brought in mind of my faults this day. Then he went on to tell how when he and the chief baker were in prison, they dreamed each a dream in one night, and how a good Hebrew youth that was there told them the meaning in the morning, and how, just as he said, everything came to pass. Send for him at once, said the king; and in a very little space of time Joseph was brought from the dungeon, and when he had shaved and changed his dress, he came in before the court.

I think this Pharaoh must have been a just, kind, sensible man. For he did not despise Joseph because he was but a slave, and a foreigner, and a prisoner as well. He spoke quite respectfully to him, as one that had great knowledge and skill. He said, I have dreamed a dream, and nobody can tell me what it means, and I have heard that you are wise in such matters. And Joseph said, It is not in me; it is from God: God shall give the king a happy answer. So the king told his dreams and Joseph said to him, that the double dream meant one thing, only it was double to show that it was both sure and near. The meaning was this: -- There seven years of great plenty, of rich full harvests and hand. But after these would come seven years of drought and scarcity, and a very grievous famine would spread over all the land, so that all the previous abundance would be forgotten. Then Joseph gave the king wise advice, to appoint officers to go through all the country in the plentiful years, and buy up and store all the corn that was not needed, and keep it for the years of dearth. The king was greatly pleased, and all the courtiers agreed with him in thinking the counsel very wise. And Pharaoh said, Who can be so fit as Joseph himself to manage the business? So he at once set Joseph over all his house, and over the whole country, and bade him rule everything as he liked best. In sign of all this he took the ring from his finger, and put it on Joseph's, and clothed him grandly, and put a gold chain

round his neck, and gave him his second best coach to ride in; and runners went before him, crying to the people, “Bow the knee!” And this was the youth sold by his brothers, put in prison by his master, and only that very day taken from the dungeon; and now there was no one in all Egypt greater than himself, except the king. How strangely had God wrought!

I need not stay to tell you how wisely Joseph managed in gathering and storing the corn of the rich harvests, nor how he dealt with the people when the dearth came. It is enough to say, that his wise measures saved a great many lives, and that both king and people safely trusted in him. But I must tell you particularly how, through this famine, and Joseph’s appointment to be the king’s prime minister in Egypt, the dreams which gave such offence to Jacob’s other sons came true at last.

The way it happened was this. The famine was not confined to Egypt, but spread into all the countries round. Now, as there had not been raised up in those lands a wise man like Joseph to foretell the dearth, and to store corn for the people’s wants, there soon began to great distress everywhere. Among other places, the famine was sore where Jacob and his family were living. They had heard, however, that there was plenty of grain in Egypt, and the father sent his ten sons down to buy for the food of the household. So they came into the city where Joseph the

governor was, and went to him to ask him to sell them some corn. They did not know about what had happened to their brother in Egypt, and when they saw him they did not know him. He would be very much changed of course; and then they could have no expectation of seeing him in so grand a situation. It soon came out, however, that they had not altogether forgotten that they had sold their brother to go into Egypt, and I believe they would rather had gone to some other country, because a place connected with past sin is painful to visit. But see how exactly Joseph's dream was made good. His ten brethren, when they came into his presence, bowed themselves down to the ground before him, as to the greatest man in Egypt next the king. Joseph knew them at once, and resolved to try them, and somewhat correct them. He put on a severe look, used a harsh voice, professed to take them for spies, and threw them into prison for three days. After that he brought them out, and said, One of you must be kept here till you come back again, but let the rest go home, and take food for your families. It was at this time that it appeared their consciences had not forgotten their cruel behaviour to their younger brother. For standing a little off, they said in their own speech, This has happened to us because we would not hearken to our brother when he cried to us to spare him, and let him go home to his father. Joseph heard them, and understood them, though he did not talk Hebrew with them, but used

an interpreter; and he was so touched that he had to go away, to keep them from seeing his tears. When he came in again, he took Simeon from the rest, and had him bound, and then sent them away very kindly. He put their money all back into the mouth of their corn sacks, and gave them bread and other provisions for their journey. So, when they got home, they were very full of the story, and made their father wonder, as well as themselves, when they told him all that happened to them. But how they went back a second time to Egypt, and what then occurred, must be told in another story. I have told enough to show that Joseph's dreams were from God. And surely you admire the wise, strange way in which God brought the meaning about. God has not given up working in wonderful ways, though he may send no prophetic dreams. He is bringing strange and beautiful things about constantly. Watch, and see if he does not so in your own lives. Trust him, ask him to guide you, and mark with care how strikingly he will answer your prayers. There is no one who plans, and works, and leads like God.

-----

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. There were twice seven cows in Pharaoh's dream; where do we read else where of fourteen cattle?
2. Do you remember a remarkable story about two cows?
3. Where do we read of wise men, not Egyptians, that gave proof of God being their teacher?
4. Can you name some other very famous occasions when there was famine in Canaan?

ANSWERS to the foregoing will be found by turning to Gen. vii.; 1 Sam. vi.; Matt. ii; 2 Sam. xxi.; 1 Kings xviii., and 2 Kings vi.

-----

*Prayer.*

O THOU only wise God, we adore Thee in the deep, strange, but glorious working of Thy providence. Thou dost indeed lead the blind in ways they know not. Thou dost wonderfully make darkness light before Thy people. Thou art now near to lead us, and show us wonders of mercy in our lives. We desire to have our hearts brought steadfastly to trust in Thee, that when things look dark we may wait for Thy light. O keep us from going away from Thee, and from doing things which will come up to sting us in after years. Lead us, Lord, and make us to follow. Draw

us, and we will run after Thee. This we ask for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

-----

## EVENING WORSHIP.

O GOD most wise and loving, who hath made us, soul and body, for Thy service and our own well-being, so let Thy holy Spirit govern all our desires and actions that, whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, all may be to Thy glory. May our affections be pure, our conscience well informed, our understanding enlarged, the sins of the flesh mortified, and all our powers and faculties to be regulated according to the beautiful and graceful order of Thy holy, wise, and loving laws. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm lxxi. 14-17.*

COME, weary souls, with sins distress'd,  
Come, and accept the promised rest;  
The Saviour's gracious call obey,  
And cast your gloomy fears away.

Oppress'd with guilt, a painful load,  
O come, and spread your woes abroad;  
Divine compassion, mighty love,  
Will all the painful load remove.

Here mercy's boundless ocean flows,  
To cleanse your guilt, and heal your woes,  
Pardon, and life, and endless peace;  
How rich the gift, how free the grace!

Lord, we accept, with thankful heart,  
The hope Thy gracious words impart;  
We come: believing, we rejoice,  
And bless the kind inviting voice.

Dear Saviour! let Thy powerful love  
Confirm our faith, our fears remove;  
And sweetly influence every breast,  
And guide us to eternal rest.

EXODUS XII. 21-33.



THEN Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out, and take you a lamb, according to your families, and kill the passover. 22. And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the bason, and strike the lintel and the two side-posts with the blood that is in the bason; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning. 23. For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side-posts, the Lord will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you. 24. And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever. 25. And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the Lord will give you, according as he hath promised, and ye shall keep this service. 26. And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? 27. That ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head, and worshipped. 28. And the children of Israel went away, and did as the Lord had commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they. 29. And it came to pass, that at midnight the Lord smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sat on his throne, unto the

first-born of the captive that was in the dungeon, and all the first-born of cattle. 30. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt: for there was not a house where there was not one dead. 31. And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go serve the Lord, as ye have said. 32. Also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have said, and be gone: and bless me also. 33. And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste; for they said, we be all dead men.

#### LUKE XXII. 14-20.

AND when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. 15. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: 16. For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. 17. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: 18. For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come, &c.

-----

*Prayer.*

O LORD, our sins would come between us and Thee like a cloud, looking up and beholding thy face: do Thou blot out our sins like a cloud, and then we will look up and see thy countenance smiling upon us. We confess the sins of the past day, the sins which have mingled with the services which we have been paying to Thee. We feel that we need to come anew and anew, once and again, to the precious blood of Christ, that it may be sprinkled on our consciences and our hearts, and that we may anew have peace with God in the blood of his Son. We confess the sins of our past lives; the sins of our youth, and the sins of our riper years; the sins of our thoughts and the sins of our tempers; the sins of our conversation and the sins of our conduct; the sins of which we have been guilty in solitude and in secrecy; the guilt we have contracted in the discharge of the business of life and in the intercourse with our fellow-men; the sins that have intruded into our religious exercises -- for the sins of our holy things are sufficient to condemn us. We would lay all these our sins on Jesus, as the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world, that He may remove them from us; and far as the east is distant from the west,

so far will He remove all our transgressions from us. O Lord, we have nothing of our own to plead: we plead thine everlasting mercies, we plead thy promises, we plead the gift of thy Son. We plead his righteousness, and we plead his sufferings; we plead his death, and we plead his resurrection; we plead the atonement which He made on earth, and we plead his all-prevailing intercession in heaven; and as we plead these, we look and wait for blessings. Lord, how much precious seed has this day been scattered in the families and in the worshipping assemblies of thy people, and in the Sunday schools! O let it not return unto Thee void. May we enjoy refreshing sleep this night; let no evil come nigh us or our dwelling; and when we awake may we be satisfied with thy likeness, and still be with Thee. The Lord knoweth what we have been in time past, what we now are, and what is before us in the future. What Thou seest that we need, in our present circumstances, and to prepare us for what is in the riches of thy grace, and by the power of thy Spirit. O Lord, we know not what is before us, as we pass through this world of change and of death: we know not what may be awaiting us, whether prosperity or adversity, whether lengthened life or a speedy death. The future is to us dark and unknown. But with Thee as our friend we will fear no evil. Go where we go, abide where we abide, lodge where we lodge. In the time of health and prosperity give us grateful as well as

joyful hearts; and when our sorrows abound, grant that our joys may much more abound. Be with us now, henceforth, and for ever more. *Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

*Morning.*

**Lord, we have sinned: do thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee; deliver us only, we pray thee, this day.**

The will of the Lord be done.

Howbeit thou art just in all that is brought upon us; for thou hast done right, but we have done wickedly.

The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

Out of the mouth of the most High proceedeth not evil and good?

Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?

Judges x. 15. Acts xxi. 14. Neh. ix. 33. Job i. 30. Lam. iii. 38, 39.

*Evening.*

**Submit yourselves therefore to God.**

I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it.

Remove thy stroke away from me: I am consumed by the blow of thine hand.

When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth: surely every man is vanity.

Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears: for I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were.

O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more.

James iv. 7. Ps. xxxix. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.

**TUESDAY.**

*Morning.*

**Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker!**

Behold, this evil is of the Lord; what should I wait for the Lord any longer?

They soon forgot his works; they waited not for his counsel;

But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert.

And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul.

Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?

Isa. xlv. 9. 2 Kings vi. 33. Ps. cvi. 13, 14, 15. Lam. iii. 37.

*Evening.*

**Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord.**

Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens.

We have transgressed, and have rebelled: thou has not pardoned.

Thou hast covered with anger, and persecuted us: thou hast slain, and hast not pitied.

Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud, that our prayer should not pass through.

Mine eye trickleth down, and ceaseth not, without any intermission,

Till the Lord look down, and behold from heaven.

Lam. iii. 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 49, 50.

## WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on thee.**

Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.

Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.

But thou, O God, shalt bring them down into the pit of destruction: bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days; but I will trust in thee.

Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:

Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

2 Chron. xiv. 11. Jer. vi. 16. Ps. lv. 22, 23. 1 Peter v. 6, 7.

*Evening.*

**I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord.**

Say not thou, I will recompense evil: but wait on the Lord, and he shall save thee.

And I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him.

Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil.



Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children.

And let the beauty of the Lord or God be upon us; and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.

Gen. xlix. 18.      Prov. xx. 22.      Isa. viii. 17.      Ps. xc. 15, 16, 17.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath.**

He hath led me, and brought me into darkness, but not into light.

Surely against me is he turned; he turneth his hand against me all the day.

My flesh and my skin hath he made old; he hath broken my bones.

He hath builded against me, and compassed me with gall and travail.

He hath set me in dark places, as they that be dead of old.

Lam. iii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

*Evening.*

**This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope.**

It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed,  
because his compassions fail not.

They are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness.

The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I  
hope in him.

The Lord is good unto them that wait for him, to the  
soul that seeketh him.

It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.

Lam. iii. 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27.

## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**For we know that the whole creation groaneth and  
travaileth in pain together until now.**

And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the  
first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within  
ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption  
of our body.

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we  
know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the  
Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings  
which cannot be uttered.

And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

Rom. viii. 22, 23, 26, 27.

*Evening.*

**And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.**

Ye have not resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

And ye have forgotten the exhortation, which speaketh unto you as children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him.

Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?

Rom. viii. 28.      Heb. xii. 4, 5, 9.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**O Lord, be gracious unto us; we have waited for thee: be thou their arm every morning, our salvation also in the time of trouble.**

He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly;  
he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his  
hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from  
hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil;

He shall dwell on high; his place of defence shall be the  
munitions of rocks; bread shall be given him, his waters  
shall be sure.

Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall  
behold the land that is very far off.

Isa. xxxiii. 2, 15, 16, 17.

*Evening.*

**For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed  
upon with our house which is from heaven:**

If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.

Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is  
God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.

Therefore we are always confident, knowing that,  
whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the  
Lord:

(For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent  
from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

2 Cor. v. 2, 3, 5, 6, 7.

# HOME PREACHER, OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

## TWELFTH WEEK.

### MORNING WORSHIP.

O GOD, our fathers' God, make Thyself known to us this day as the God of Zion. In Thy courts may we seek Thyself and find Thee there. Bless Thy day to us, so that in its sacred services we may have spiritual communion with Thee as the Father of our spirits. In Thy holy word may we hear Thy voice speaking to us, and may our psalms and hymns of praise help us to rise in spirit to that blessed world where our great High Priest now is, and where we humbly hope one day through His grace to be. We present our petitions to Thy throne, in and through Him as our advocate with the Father. Amen.

### HYMN, *or PSALM xxxvi. 5-9.*

Far from these narrow scenes of night  
Unbounded glories rise,  
And realms of infinite delight  
Unknown to mortal eyes.

Far distant land! could mortal eyes  
But half its joys explore,  
How would our spirits long to rise,  
And dwell on earth no more!

O may the heavenly prospect fire  
Our hearts with ardent love,  
Till wings of faith and strong desire  
Bear every thought above.

Prepare us, Lord, by grace divine,  
For thy bright courts on high;  
Then bid our spirits rise and join  
The chorus of the sky.

#### EXODUS XVIII. 5-7, 13-27.

AND Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, came with his sons and his wife unto Moses into the wilderness, where he encamped at the mount of God: 6. And he said unto Moses, I thy father-in-law Jethro am come unto thee, and thy wife, and her two sons with her. 7. And Moses went out to meet his father-in-law and did obeisance, and kissed him; and they asked each other of their welfare: and they came into the tent. 13. And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat

to judge the people: and the people stood by Moses from the morning unto the evening. 14. And when Moses' father-in-law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What is this thing that thou doest to the people? why sittest Thou thyself along, and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even? 15. And Moses said unto his father-in-law, Because the people come unto me to enquire of God. 16. When they have a matter, they come unto me, and I judge between one and another, and I do make them know the statutes of God and his laws. 17. And Moses' father-in-law said unto him, The thing that thou doest is not good. 18. Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou and this people that is with thee: for this thing is too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone. 19. Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee: Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God: 20. And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do. 21. Moreover, thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. 22. And let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee. 13. If

thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace. So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father-in-law, and did all that he had said. 25. And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. 26. And they judged the people at all seasons: the hard causes thy brought unto Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves. 27. And Moses let his father-in-law depart; and he went his way into his own land.

-----

*Prayer.*

O LORD, we adore thee as our Creator, Preserver, and Redeemer. Thou hast made Thyself known to us in the works which Thou hast made, and which proclaim Thine eternal power and Godhead. We see Thy presence in our lives, which are full of the proofs of Thy loving care. In Thy blessed Son, our Saviour, we behold the full glory of Thy grace, and can speak to Thee as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and as our God and Father in Him. We ask Thy help while we try to address our petitions to Thy throne. We feel we are unworthy of this privilege, and



but for Thy mercy we could not draw near to Thee. We are unable in any way to engage in Thy service, as we should do, and ask that Thou wouldst give us of Thine own wherewith to serve Thee.

Accept our thanks for the revelation of Thyself which Thou hast given to us in Thine own word. We desire to trace there the evidences of Thy wisdom, faithfulness, and love. Thou hast been true to all Thy promises, even when these have exceeded our highest expectations. May we learn to judge of Thee, not by ourselves, but as Thou art made known to us by the testimony of Thy truth. Unveil to us Thy glorious character as the Scriptures proclaim it to us, and not only with our minds but in our hearts may we now Thee as the Lord our God. Aid us in trusting Thee as the Omniscient Jehovah. May we not shrink back in unbelief from Thine all-seeing eyes. May we learn to repose confidence in Thy word, which tells us that Thy compassion is as infinite as Thy knowledge. When our faith is tried, and our penitence flows forth, may we be able to say, "Yea, Lord, Thou knowest all things: Thou knowest that we love Thee."

Guide us by Thy wisdom. Teach us to lean on it, and not on our own understanding. Keep us from going astray from Thy precepts. May our course ever be in that way whose fruit is unto holiness, and the end of which is everlasting life. We pray Thee to bless all Thy people. Be

with those in every place who seek to serve Thee in the gospel of Thy Son. Especially we commend to Thy care those who minister to men in the things of God. May their labours enjoy Thy blessing and conduce to the spread of Thy glory. Be kind to all sick and infirm persons. Draw nigh to those that are of a broken spirit. Lead those who seek Thee in a plain path; and may those that love Thy salvation say continually, “The Lord be magnified.”

The grace of God be with our spirits. Our souls thirst for Thee, the living God. When shall we appear before Thee in Zion? Fit us for Thy service on earth and Thy presence in heaven. It is only through Thee that we can hope to come to Thee. With Thee is the fountain of life, and in Thy light we shall see light.

Blot out all our sins. Accept, sanctify, and deliver us from evil; for Thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

**R**IGHTEOUS God, help us, as Thy children in Jesus Christ, like Him to love Thee with heart, soul, and strength, and our neighbour as ourselves. May the same mind of love

which was in Christ be also in us, so that we, in the possession and practice of love, may fulfil Thy law, and be followers of God as dear children. *Amen.*

PARAPHRASE LI. 4-7.

WE know, that when the soul, uncloth'd,  
Shall from this body fly,  
'Twill animate a purer frame  
With life that cannot die.

Such are the hopes that cheer the just;  
These hopes their God hath giv'n;  
His Spirit is the earnest now,  
And seals their souls for heav'n.

We walk by faith of joys to come,  
Faith grounded on his word;  
But while this body is our home,  
We mourn an absent Lord.

What faith rejoices to believe,  
We long and pant to see;  
We would be absent from the flesh,  
And present, Lord! with thee.

## PSALM XVI.

PRESERVE me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust. 2. O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord: my goodness extendeth not to thee; 3. But to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight. 4. Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god: their drink-offerings of blood will I not offer, nor take up their names into my lips. 5. The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot. 6. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage. 7. I will bless the Lord, who hath given me counsel; my reins also instruct me in the night-seasons. 8. I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. 9. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth; my flesh also shall rest in hope: 10. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. 11. Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy: at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

## HEBREWS IX.

THEN verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. 2. For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shew-bread; which is called the Sanctuary. 3. And after the second vail, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; 4. Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; 5. And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy-seat; of which we cannot now speak particularly. 6. Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. 7. But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: 8. The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing. 9. Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; 10. Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances,

imposed on them until the time of reformation. 11. But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; 12. Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. 13. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; 14. How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God? 15. And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. 16. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. 17. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth. 18. Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood. 19. For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the people, 20. Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. 21. Moreover, he sprinkled likewise

with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry. 22. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. 23. It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. 24. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us, &c.

-----

## SERMON XII.

“WITHIN THE VAIL.” --Heb. vi. 19.

THERE is no veil in the Christian church. Christ took it away by His precious death, and when He died, “the veil of the temple was rent in twain.” Here, however, the inspired writer speaks of another veil, within which Christ entered. This can be no other place than heaven, into which Jesus the Son of God has passed, as our great high priest. He went in once for all, and now, our text tells us, He is “within the veil.” “Within the veil!” These are great and awful words! Think of what they mean. “Within the veil!” This is an arrangement of words that does not perhaps

arrest us at first, but let us once catch their meaning, and we cannot help repeating them. In the busy street as in the silent chamber, in the crowded church and by the grave's mouth, these are the words which we cannot utter without emotion: "Within the vail!"

We shall take the text as a brief description of heaven, and try to show that there are good reasons why that better world should be thus spoken of. It reminds us --

*I. That entrance into heaven is effected by the death of Christ.*

The place of the vail in the worship of the Old Testament church is made plain by its position, both in the tabernacle and the temple. It hung between the Holy of Holies, in which were kept all the sacred symbols of God's special presence with His people, and the holy place. Made in a peculiar and carefully prescribed way, it could be turned aside only once a year, and by the high priest alone. As he lifted up its awful folds, and stepped solemnly within the vail, he had to take incense and the blood of sacrifices with him, to sprinkle upon the mercy-seat, lest he died. Outside and far off the mass of the people stood awe-stricken and silent; all that was heard was the echo of the high priest's feet, or the tinkling of the bells upon his garments, as he moved to and fro in the discharge of his high duties. What could betoken more strikingly than this impressive order, the exclusion of men from the fellowship of God, and the



terrible chasm between them and the Holy One which their sins had caused? Hence, too, the need for this being done away by the gospel. The writer of this letter tells us, accordingly, of a new and living way into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, and he adds, that it was consecrated for us “through the vail,” that is to say, His flesh. In other words, the completed sacrifice of our Lord Jesus on Calvary was accepted by God, the obstacles which stood in the way of man’s communion with his Maker were removed, the vail of the temple was torn asunder, and we may all now come boldly to the throne of grace. “The holiest” which is spoken of here is not confined to heaven. It denotes the manifested presence of the Most High everywhere. That is holy ground where God is seen and honoured, and we may draw near to it with all boldness by the blood of Jesus. On the other hand, however, all holy places on earth are but the shadows of heaven. It is there that the pure and perfect worship of Jehovah is presented, and of it the Holy of Holies in the ancient temple was only an apt emblem. Our admission into its blessedness is the result of our redemption to God by the blood of Christ, and this is unquestionably a prominent idea in the name given to heaven as “within the vail.” Separation from God and exclusion from heaven are the fruits of sin, for “the wages of sin is death.” Restoration to God and entrance into heaven are effected by the death of Christ, for “the gift of

God is eternal life,” and this life is in His Son. When He died He said, “It is finished,” and then He entered for us as a forerunner “within the vail.” Without that death of His for us on earth, there could have been no life for us with Him in heaven. Its sacred threshold was shut against us by a thick vail, which no hands could lift but those that were pierced for us by the nails. They are hands “mighty to save,” but their might comes from the strange fact that they were stretched out for us bleeding on the bitter cross.

These are mysterious sayings, but they are often and plainly uttered in God’s holy word. They relate to a mystery as unfathomable as their own -- man’s sin against God. Over against it they set up the wonder of wonders, in God’s sovereign mercy and reconciling grace through that crucified Jesus, at the sight of whom faith exclaims, “Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh.” Let us look, then, at this truth in its relation to the sinner’s entrance into heaven. His Lord has entered heaven before him, wearing his nature, and as the elder brother of the family. In the flesh -- that is to say, as a man -- he has gone within the vail. Taking possession of the heavenly places, He has thrown them open to all for whom they are prepared. That preparation of them has been made in virtue of what He has paid for it. His obedience and sufferings --the rending of His flesh -- that is the ground on which sinful men may go to heaven. With their feet resting on

this sure foundation, they can advance undismayed into the very presence of God, for they have a great high priest passed into the heavens. Thus it is, farther, that the nearer they get to the vail the more clearly they see Jesus within it. It seems at times to be lifted up for them before they pass through it, that they may behold the King in His beauty. From the sight they get of Him they draw courage for the last battle with death, and their desires grow more ardent to be absent from the body, that they may be present with the Lord. Their words bespeak their trust, and their hope shines through their countenance, as in the case of him whose face was seen as it had been the face of an angel, and whose transfigured beauty before he was within the vail Scripture thus explains, that “he looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.”

Heaven is spoken of as within the vail, because

II. *What separates us from Heaven is so slight, and may be so suddenly removed.*

It seems to be significant that between us and the better world there should be only a vail. It is so thin and slight, that it hardly needs any hand to raise it. The breath of the passing wind makes it tremble; and when it comes laden with the air of the grave, it forces it aside, and the spirit of man, which a moment before was with us, is away from us for ever, “within the vail.” That vail is the curtain

of time, woven by a divine hand, to be an almost transparent medium to separate this world from the world to come. Thin though it be, it is sufficient for its purpose. Nor is it without its resemblance to the old vail which hung before the Holy of Holies. Like it, it is of many colours, blue, purple, and scarlet. It has, likewise, curious handiwork all over it, not unlike the “fine twined linen of curious work.” It also bears to be supported strongly and yet beautifully, as it was on its four pillars of shittim-wood, overlaid with gold. Nay, it admits of being made glorious by the tokens of God’s presence resting on it, for it is never made aright unless there can be the cherubim upon it. Such then, is this vail which God has made. It hangs everywhere before our eyes. What but this is nature, and history, and the world, and life, and love itself? The blue of the sky, the sun’s golden rays, the heart’s varied experiences, they are all God’s vail, intercepting the view of His full glory, and yet with such traces of that glory shining through as help us to aspire after a clearer and fuller vision of it.

Meanwhile the vail is marked by mystery. We are continually endeavouring to understand it, but are constrained to own that we know it only in part. Its revelations we can do little more than guess at; and indeed they would be unintelligible, but for the light which falls upon them from the more sure word of prophecy. It is through that glass alone that we can read the writing on the

vail, so that with open face we may behold there the glory of the Lord. Even with this help we cannot comprehend the principle on which the veil is thrown open before those who have to pass within it. Each day brings a summons for some to leave time and become familiar with eternity. So soon as the message is delivered it must be obeyed; and those who get it rise up at once, because the Master is come and calleth for them. An ingenious writer speaks of the postman Time going his rounds, and bearing from house to house his burden of letters. He knows nothing of them but the address. He may not read their contents, and no one may but the man to whom they are sent; but any morning there may put into the hands of any of us this fatal missive. We may not boast ourselves of to-morrow, since we know not what a day shall bring forth. Now, it is evidently in mercy that God has constructed the veil of time so mysteriously. If we knew it better, such knowledge would be too great for us. Were we told the hour when the veil should be lifted up to separate our friends from us or us from them, we could not enjoy their society. That fixed hour of parting would be heard ringing its knell of woe through all our hours of joy. Let us not murmur, then, though our friends are suddenly snatched from our arms and borne away within the veil. There is love, as well as wisdom, in the manner of their removal from us. This world is like a great workshop, and we who are but visitors

in it are apt to get confused amid the crash of the machinery and the noise of the looms. The Master, however, knows all about the webs He has to weave, which shall be of the darker, and which shall be of the brighter threads. He knows the lights and the shades alike -- how to begin His work, and when to cut it short -- so that whenever we are tempted to raise our voice against His ways of working, we may hear His own voice speaking to us these words of warning, "Be still, and know that I am God." The great lesson we have to lay to heart is preparation for passing within the veil ourselves. Let us look at the time and life as given to us for the purpose of being spent in the service of God, and to make us meet for heaven. The veil they form should be so looked at and used by us, that through means of it we shall be getting ready for things unseen and eternal. Let us try in some degree to enter into the spirit of the poet, when speaking of it he says: --

"O could I see as in truth they be,  
The glories of heaven that encompass me;  
I should lightly hold the tissued fold  
Of that marvellous curtain of blue and gold.  
Soon the whole, like a parched scroll,  
Shall before my amazed sight unroll,  
And without a screen at one burst be seen  
The Presence wherein I have ever been."

Heaven is spoken of as within the veil, because  
Lastly, *It hides from our view much which we long to know.*

Behind the veil in the temple of the Jews were all the precious symbols of their faith and worship. The golden censer, the ark of the covenant, Aaron's rod, the tables of the covenant, the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy-seat -- these were all within the veil. With these divine emblems only one representative man was brought into contact, the type of Him who is our high priest for ever, the ascended Intercessor at God's right hand. If we pass from the actual case to the spiritual reality, we see that heaven contains much which at present is hidden from our gaze as by a veil, but which we are sure to become acquainted with so soon as we pass within the veil ourselves. The subjects which this idea suggests are very numerous, and we can only select two or three leading aspects of them. Let us select --

*The influence of the Saviour's presence.* -- There can be no doubt that this is a chief element in the life of heaven. Even on earth Christian principle just means faith in Christ. The more distinctly He is seen, the stronger and firmer is the hold which the believer has of spiritual and everlasting life. Hence it is that so much stress is to be laid on the use of the various means of grace, which are in fact the hem of

our high priest's garment, so that the virtue which comes out of them is all derived from Him. Even it, alas! often grows stiff and cold in our hands, and then the living connection between the hand of faith and Christ's person and work is lost. Within the veil that connection shall be cemented never to be again broken, and all who follow the Forerunner into heaven shall know what it is to be like Him, because they see Him as He is. The very sight of the Lord Jesus must exert a transforming influence on the natures of those who have learnt to know and love Him. To be with Him is equivalent to being like Him, just as it is impossible to enjoy the sun's rays and yet be in darkness. The Lamb who is in the midst of the throne is the light of heaven. He is the spring of spiritual life to all its inhabitants, as well as the source of all their blessedness, for of that city which is without a sun we are told, not only that the glory of God doth lighten it, but that the Lamb is the light thereof. Even here we have at times such views of Christ as help us to apprehend this truth in part, but they are so imperfect as to prompt a desire to understand it better -- a desire which shall be fully gratified only when, being absent from the body, we shall be present with the Lord.

Again, the veil hides from our view

*The conditions of a sinless state.* -- Our best experience in the worship of God here is that of those who can only



venture to approach Him with a sacrifice in their hands. We are, it is true, all priests to God now, with one great high priest over the house of God. Our hearts tell us, that although we have access into the holiest of all, we are still unholy as we draw nigh to God. It is our hope, but not our attainment, to be in a sinless state. We long for the period when we too shall pass within the veil, and be holy as those who are holy there; when there shall be no impurity in our motives, and no imperfection in our service, when we shall be at home in the unsullied purity of heaven; and when, looking in upon our sinless hearts, we shall see only the spotless holiness of God reflected from their untroubled depths. We should not be impatient of the blessed bondage of earthly ties and human love, and yet we cannot but feel how hard it is to bear the one and cherish the other without soiling the worship which the heart owes to God. We would not cast them off, but we would fain put on above them the fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteousness of saints. What would we not give to belong to that great multitude that stand before the throne and before the Lamb, singing the song of salvation, with white robes, and with palms in their hands! Only in our best moments here does this condition of things stand out to our view as a living reality. The curtain of the present for the most part hides it from our eyes. When it is lifted up, and we step into the invisible kingdom of Christ beyond the

grave, we shall realize what it is to live knowing the truth without being condemned by it; seeing what is right and still evermore cleaving to it; near to God, but not afraid of Him; in the possession of the blessedness of the pure in heart who see God.

Finally, the veil hides from our view

*The imperishable and perfect happiness of our departed Christian friends.*

Our advantages in this respect, as compared with those of just men of old, are indeed great. Their high priest went within the veil, and he came back alive; but he died at last as other men died, and he gave no sign. Our great high priest went within the veil by the dark passage of death, but when He came back it was to die no more, and to rise to heaven to receive to Himself there all who live and die in Him. Them that sleep in Jesus God brings with Him. Yet, simple as all this seems to be, it requires deep and earnest faith to rest in its simplicity. Indeed faith must summon hope to her aid, as an anchor of the soul sure and steadfast, and entering into that within the veil. That those who were so lately living by our side are living somewhere, though their bodies lie in the cold grave; that they are conscious and happy, though their voice to us is silenced, and they are far away from those they loved so well and by whom they are so much beloved; that they have no cares to distract and no sorrows to grieve them now, though lately they had so

much to make them anxious, and were torn from our arms amidst lamentations and woe -- all this we believe of the dead in Christ; but, ah! how hard it is to make faith here what it should be -- the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen! Within the veil! They are there; but how the poor lonely heart of the mourner presses against that veil, like some imprisoned bird that beats its wings and breast against the cage in its vain attempts to join its lost companions in the distant sky. The bereaved are made to feel that in their imperfect faith they cannot reach so far as they fain would; that those they have loved and lost are indeed severed from them by more than land or sea; and that their utmost attainment is to say with David of his child, "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." What then, shall it be at last, when we, too, pass within the veil? When we find our beloved ones all safe and all at rest? When again we shall feel ourselves near those from whom we once thought we could never live apart, and when we awake from this life's troubled frightsome dreams to the inconceivable and unending blessedness that is within the veil? How it shall be with us and them then, how they shall look and what they shall say, let us not try too anxiously and pryingly to learn. Heaven is our home, but there is a veil hiding it from our view. Let us not seek to strip it of its mystery. Let us not play childishly with its awful folds. They are to be looked at, and not handled; and

if we behold them with trustful eyes, our hearts shall bow submissive to His will, which makes heaven to all who are on earth a world “within the veil.”

With these suggestions of those striking words before us, let us hear them bidding us beware --

First, *of the veil that is on the heart.*

The apostle describes some who have veiled hearts when they read the Scriptures. They are those whose minds are blinded, and who are under such a thick covering of unbelief and prejudices, that they will not look to Christ at all. We are exposed to this danger too. The truth about the Lord Jesus is set before us, and if we will not receive it we judge ourselves unworthy of eternal life. Ah! there is no veil so dreadful as that of the unbelieving heart. It sees no love in God, no truth in His promises, no grace in His Son, no ground for faith, no hope of heaven. Surely, of all sins this is the most inexcusable, to close our eyes against the clear full light of the blessed gospel-day. Let us be persuaded to look to Him whom that light reveals, and turning to the Lord the veil shall be taken away.

Let us be encouraged, in fine,

*To acquire the habit of looking within the veil.*

It is there we can alone see that which shall make us happy. Some are seemingly happy without it. Their life is prosperous, and their cup is full. Their happiness, however, is insecure, and it is often seen to be like the prophet's

gourd, which came up in a night, and perished in a night. In all such cases, when that happens to men which makes them say, "It is better for me to die than to live," God, their great Teacher, wants them to learn this lesson of looking within the veil. Do our hearts despond under our many trials and amidst the thick mists of this worldly state? let us think of the church as it is within the veil. Does a strong wind beat upon our house, break down its supports, and dash its darling idols to the ground? Let us long the more for the reunited hearts and the inseparable friendships within the veil. In sorrow itself there is no sin, but only in the sorrow with the downward look. Over sorrow, when it looks within the veil, death itself has no power. It may take from our eyes the visible form of the objects of our love, but from our souls it cannot take away that love which is given to us for ever, and which shall one day find freest scope in a higher sphere. "It is but a little while when this thin veil of clouds hanging its darkness between us and that region of brightness shall break away, and our God shall put to shame all our weeping, giving us back our lost, clad in heaven's own garb, and beaming in all the light and health of that happiness and glory in which they have been kept, and nursed, and nourished." --Alexander MacEwan, D. D.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

SOMETHING MORE OF HOW JOSEPH'S DREAMS CAME TRUE.

THE sore famine still continued. The stock of corn in Jacob's household began to get low. So one day he said to his sons, You must go down to Egypt again, and buy some food. His sons were quite willing to go. But there was one great difficulty. Joseph had told them that, when they came back, they were to bring Benjamin with them. Benjamin was his full brother, the child of his mother Rachel, as well as of his father Jaob. Now when Reuben, Judah, and the others came back from their first visit to Egypt, and told how the lord of the country wanted to see their youngest brother next time, their father broke out into a cry of distress, and said he would not let Benjamin go. He said that his brother was dead, and he only was left of his mother Rachel's sons, and if any mischief were to happen to him, his own gray hairs would be brought down with grief to the grave. When Jacob, therefore, bade his sons go down to Egypt again, there was this great difficulty to be got over. He could not bear the thought of letting Benjamin go with them, and he even blamed them for letting the ruler of Egypt know that they had another brother. At last, however, Judah, having reasoned with his father, and

promised to take every care of Benjamin, got him to yield, and he sent them all away with wise advice and earnest prayer. I am sure it must have been a sad and anxious time to Jacob while they were away. Only his heart was subdued now, and, I think, he was waiting on the Lord.

So ten brothers of Joseph came before him a second time. Another, you recollect, was in confinement in Egypt. When Joseph saw Benjamin with the rest he told his steward to bring them all to his house to dinner. The steward took them away from the public office to Joseph's private house, without telling them, at first, why he did it. This made them very much afraid indeed. They thought they were to be found fault with for not paying for the corn they brought the first time: for Joseph, on sending them away, had told his servant to put their money into their sacks without their knowing it, and when they found it out they did not know what to make of it. So now they thought they were to be taken to task about it. But when they spoke to the steward, and told him how their money had been put in their sacks they did not know how, and that they had brought it back along with more for more corn, he made light of it, and said he had got their money the first time all right. Then he behaved very kindly to them, and at mid-day they were all brought in to dine with Joseph. Joseph did every thing to put them at their ease, and yet managed to keep them from discovering who he was,

although at first when he saw Benjamin, he had to go away to another room to weep. During dinner he paid them all attention, sending them meat from his own table, but he was especially kind to Benjamin. All the while, however, not even Benjamin knew him. Next morning Joseph told his steward to give them the corn they wanted, putting back their money as before, and putting also a particular silver cup into Benjamin's sack. The steward did all this, and the eleven (for Simeon was with them now) left the city, very happy indeed. They had not gone far, however, before they saw the steward of Joseph coming after them, and when he came up to them he taxed them roundly with stealing his lord's cup -- a special cup that was of great value to him. They were astonished to hear this, and said if any thing belonging to his lord could be found with them, they all deserved to be made slaves, and the one that had been the thief should die. You may judge then of their wonder and distress, when taking down their sacks one by one, they came at last to Benjamin's, and opened it to find the very cup in the mouth of it. They had not a word to say, but were torn with grief. With rent clothes and sore hearts they went away back into the town. Judah was saddest of all, thinking of his promise to his father to take care of Benjamin, and bring him safe home. So when Joseph proposed to keep Benjamin as his slave, Judah went near to him, and made such a touching speech, asking to be kept in



his youngest brother's stead, for fear of killing his father with grief, that Joseph was not able to stand it any longer. So he told every body to leave the room, except his brothers; and then, with loud weeping, he told them who he was. He said, I am Joseph -- is my father really living yet? At first his brothers could not believe him; they stood quite bewildered, but he talked with them about what had happened to him after they sold him, and how God made him lord of Egypt. He said to them not to be vexed about their conduct to him, for it was God that meant to use him for the saving of many lives. At last they came to believe him, and there was such embracing, and tears of joy, as had never been known. In a short time the news spread, and were carried to the king, and he was delighted to hear that Joseph's brethren had come. So he sent to say that Joseph should ask them to leave Canaan and come down to Egypt and stay there. This was what Joseph intended for he longed very much to see his father, and be near him again. Away, therefore, he sent his brethren, and told them to make haste and bring his father down. He sent provisions with them for the journey, and waggons for his father and the women and children to ride in. And then, I can well believe, he counted the days till they could return.

Jacob was waiting anxiously for their coming back from Egypt, to see if Benjamin was with them, and Simeon, and to hear how they had sped. You may be sure he was

very glad when he saw them all coming; but when they met him, and said, Joseph is yet living, and it is he who is lord of all Egypt, and who has been selling us corn, the old man's heart grew sick within him. He could not believe them, and thought they were but mocking him, and bringing up his great sorrow afresh; but they went over the whole story to him, and told him how Joseph wanted him to go down to Egypt and end his days there, and had sent carriages to fetch him. He came then to see that they were telling the truth, and his spirit revived, and looking at the carriages, he said, Say no more; I will go and see my son before I die.

They had a bustling time of it for a little, making ready to go to Egypt. But they were soon on their road; and when they had got as far as Beer-sheba, Jacob offered sacrifices to the God that had been so good to him. No doubt he asked God to be with him, now that he was going into a strange land. And God spoke to him in a dream, and told him not to fear. So next day Jacob went gladly on his way. At length the company came near to Egypt, and Judah went to tell Joseph. Immediately Joseph rode out in his grand chariot, and went to meet his father. When the father and son met, it was a sight to see. They fell on each other's necks, and wept a long time; and Jacob said, I can die now, for I have seen my child's face, whom I have mourned so long as dead. He lived, however, a good many years after that, and

Joseph had the duty of taking care of him in his old age, and of standing beside him when at last he gave up the ghost, after bidding his sons carry him up and bury him along with his fathers in the promised land.

Such was the way in which the boy's strange dreams were brought to pass.

-----

### QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Do you remember the name which Benjamin's mother gave him, and for what reason?
2. Can you find a text where a good man advises to wait on the Lord in trouble, and repeats his advice, as if he could give no other so good?
3. Do you remember a feast, given by a brother to brothers, that ended in blood?
4. Who was it that showed special attention to a guest, by setting a particular portion of meat before him?
5. Can you find a text to show that Joseph got the best revenge on his brethren by doing them kindness?
6. Can you give instances of persons weeping on each other's necks -- 1, Of two brothers meeting; 2, Of two friends parting; 3, Of a number of friends parting?

7. In what other case, greater than even Joseph's, did men mean to kill, while God meant to save many lives?

8. Can you name two cases where people could not believe good news for very joy and wonder?

CONSULT, if necessary, for answers to the above -- Gen. xxxv.; Ps. xxvii.; 2 Sam. xiii.; 1 Sam. ix; Rom. xii.; Gen. xxxiii., 1 Sam. xx., Acts iii.; Luke xxiv. and Acts xii.

-----

### QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE LESSON.

1. What was the occasion of the first dissatisfaction which arose in the church at Jerusalem?

2. What did the apostles recommend with a view to put an end to the murmuring?

3. What were the special gifts or qualifications required in those who should be set over the services of the church referred to?

4. Who is the Author of all spiritual gifts?

-----

### *Prayer.*

O LORD, Thou art a God that doest wonders. Thou hast thine own strange, but wise and beautiful ways, of bringing Thy purposes to pass. Thou dost often make the wrath of man to praise Thee, and out of evil Thou bringest good. We give Thee thanks, especially, that Thou didst design mercy for the world in the death of Thy son, although he was taken and crucified and slain by wicked hands. We praise Thee that after he was delivered unto death, Thou has raised him again, and set him at Thine own right hand. We would bow the knee to Him. We pray to be fed, and guided, and cared for by Him. We would serve Him all our days on earth, and dwell with Him for ever. O Lord, grant us this, for His name's sake. *Amen.*

-----

### EVENING WORSHIP.

ALMIGHTY God! We lift up our eyes to Thee, who art the fountain of life, Thyself the living one. Thou givest life to those who look to Thee! Help us, by Thy Holy Spirit,

to seek thy face. Shine upon us with the light of Thy truth,  
and bring us in Thine own way, home to Thyself, that we  
may dwell for ever in the light of thy countenance, though  
Jesus Chist our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, or *Psalm xix. 7-11.*

O FOR the wings of faith to rise  
Within the vail, and see  
The saints above, how great their joys,  
How bright their glories be!

Once they were mourning here below,  
And wet their couch with tears;  
They wrestled hard, as we do now,  
With sins, and doubts, and fears.

We ask them whence their vict'ry came  
they, with united breath,  
Ascribe their conquests to the Lamb,  
Their triumph to His death.

They mark'd the footsteps that He trod;  
His zeal inspir'd their breast;

And foll'wing their Incarnate God,  
Possess the promis'd rest.

Our glorious Leader claims our praise  
For His own pattern giv'n,  
While the bright Cloud of Witnesses  
Shows the same path to heav'n.

#### ACTS VI. 1-7.

AND in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. 2. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. 3. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. 4. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. 5. And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor,

and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch; 6. Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them. 7. And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly: and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

## 1 CORINTHIANS XII. 1-11.

NOW concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. 2. Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led. 3. Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed; and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. 4. Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit, &c.

-----

FATHER of all mercies, we come into Thy presence as Thine unworthy children. We own that we are unworthy of Thy kindness. We have gone astray from Thee and from Thy ways. Hadst thou left us to ourselves, we should have been alike without help and without hope. Blessed be Thy name! Thou didst raise up a Saviour for us. In everlasting



love Thou didst take pity on us, and didst send forth Thy well-beloved Son to be our Redeemer from sin and death. For Thy great gift of Him for our salvation, we give thee humble, hearty thanks. We lay hold of Thee as our strength, because Thou hast let us know Thee as the Lord our Saviour. We confess our exceeding sinfulness in lightly esteeming the Rock of our Salvation. Give us, we pray, a deeper sense of our own necessities, a clearer view of the infinite excellencies of the Lord Jesus Christ, and a more earnest desire to cleave to Him and to Him only, as all our salvation and all our desire. Be graciously pleased to make us like Christ as our blessed example. Take away from us the selfishness and the self-seeking which mar our resemblance to our Lord. Form in us the mind which was also in Him. May the words which He has spoken to us be spirit and life to our souls. Help us to look to Jesus habitually, that our likeness to Him may grow, and men may take knowledge of us that we have been with Him. Keep us from being unduly cast down by the consciousness of our slow progress in the Christian life. May we learn to hold on in the good work and way of the Lord. Enable us to follow our Master by faith into the heavenly world. Looking within the veil, may we see Him as the Forerunner there; and seeking to be admitted into the fulness of His joy hereafter, may we be found here walking in His footsteps.

We give Thee thanks and praise for Thy goodness to Thy servants who have already finished their course and kept the faith. We rejoice to think of them as delivered from sin, and conquerors over death. May we be followers of them, as they were followers of Christ, so that at last we too may be joined to their blessed fellowship above.

Comfort all mourners as they lament the loss of friends who have been taken away from the present evil world. Be the father of the fatherless and the widow's judge. Send Thy strengthening Spirit into all hearts that are even now in the bitterness of sorrow. When we suffer from the rod of Thy chastisements, may we remember that it is in our Father's hands, and as obedient children may we accept its inflictions with trustful and uncomplaining hearts. Draw near to those who are in pain or sickness; aid them in bearing their trials, and in preparing for what may still be in store for them; make Thy grace sufficient for them, and perfect Thy strength in their weakness.

Make us all ready for our latter end. We bless Thee that there is a rest which remains for Thy people. May we even now enter into it, that when we pass within the veil we may be received into its full blessedness. Give us such firm, clear faith in our adorable Redeemer, that we shall feel assured of our safety in His hands. May we abide in Him, and then we know He will never leave, never forsake us. O that we may be assured, on good grounds, that He is our

shield and buckler in this world; and when we go into the world beyond the grave, may it be our joyful experience that neither death nor life, nor any other creature is able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Hear our prayers, good Lord, and give us a gracious answer to them, for Thine own mercies' sake.  
*Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

*Morning.*

**Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the Lord.**

And if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him.

But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

Lev. xix. 18, 33, 34.

John xiii. 34.

*Evening.*

**But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;**

That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

Matt. v. 44, 45, 46, 48.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.**

Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

Rom. xii. 9, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21.

*Evening.*

**Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.**

Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

Rom. xii. 14, 15, 16. Rom. xiii. 9, 10.

**WEDNESDAY.**

*Morning.*

**And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:**

Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God.  
Honour the king.

Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.

For this is thank-worthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.

For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.

Heb. x. 24. 1 Pet. ii. 17, 18, 19, 20.

*Evening.*

**For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:**

Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:

Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

1 Pet. ii. 21, 22, 23, 24.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**He that covereth a transgression seeketh love.**

A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly;  
and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,  
long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh,  
with the affections and lusts.

If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

Let us not be desirous of vain-glory, provoking one  
another, envying one another.

Prov. xvii. 9.    Prov. xviii. 24.    Gal. v. 22, 23, 24, 25, 26.

*Evening.*

**And the Lord make you to increase and abound in  
love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we  
do toward you.**

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that  
ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering,  
forbearing one another in love;

Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

1 Thes. iii. 12. Eph. iv. 1, 2, 3.

## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,**

Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem the other better than themselves.

Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

Phil. ii. 1, 2, 3, 4.

*Evening.*

**Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.**

Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?



And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?

Phil. ii. 5.          1 John iii. 16, 17.          Matt. v. 47.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.**

Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another; love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous:

Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile:

Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it.

John xiii. 35.    1 Peter iii. 8, 9, 10, 11.

*Evening.*

**My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.**

And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.

For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.

Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God.

And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.

And this is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.

1 John iii. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23.

# HOME PREACHER, OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

THIRTEENTH WEEK.

## MORNING WORSHIP.

ETERNAL Spirit, who art with and in Thy Church, we beseech of Thee so to enlighten our minds in the knowledge of the Eternal Son, that we, being born again and renewed in the Spirit of our minds, may ever behold His glory, and be more and more changed into His image from glory to glory, until at His second coming we shall be perfectly like Him, because we shall see Him as He is. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm xxvii. 4-6.*

JESU! the very thought of Thee  
With sweetness fills the breast;  
But sweeter far thy face to see,  
And in thy presence rest.

No voice can sing, no heart can frame,  
Nor can the memory find,  
A sweeter sound than Jesu's name,  
The Saviour of mankind.

O Hope of every contrite heart!  
O Joy of all the meek!  
To those who fall how kind Thou art!  
How good to those who seek!

But what to those who find? Ah! This  
No tongue nor pen can show;  
The love of Jesus what it is  
None but his loved-ones know.

Jesu! May all confess thy name,  
Thy wondrous love adore;  
And, seeking Thee, themselves inflame,  
To see Thee more and more.

The Jesu, may our voices bless;  
Thee may we love alone;  
And ever in our lives express  
The image of thine own.

Jesu! our only joy be Thou,  
As thou our prize wilt be;  
In Thee be all our glory now,  
And through eternity.

## DEUTERONOMY V. 1-22.

AND Moses called all Israel, and said unto them, Hear O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may learn them, and keep and do them. 2. The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. 3. The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day. 4. The Lord talked with you face to face in the mount, out of the midst of the fire, 5. (I stood between the Lord and you at that time, to shew you the word of the Lord; for ye were afraid by reason of the fire, and went not up into the mount,) saying, 6. I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. 7. Thou shalt have none other gods before me. 8. Thou shalt not make thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters beneath the earth: 9. Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, 10. And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. 11. Thou shalt not take the name of the

Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. 12. Keep the sabbath-day to sanctify it, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee. 13. Six days thou shalt labour, and do all thy work; 14. But the seventh day is the sabbath-day of the Lord thy God, in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou. 15. Remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath-day. 16. Honour thy father and thy mother, as the Lord thy God hath commanded me; that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. 17. Thou shalt not kill. 18. Neither shalt thou commit adultery. 19. Neither shalt thou steal. 20. Neither shalt thou bear false witness against thy neighbor. 21. Neither shalt thou desire thy neighbour's wife, neither shalt thou covet thy neighbours's house, his field, or his man-servant, or his maid-servant, his ox, or his ass, or any thing that is thy neighbour's. 22. These words the Lord spake unto all your assembly in the mount, out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness,

with a great voice; and he added no more: and he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me.

### MATTHEW V. 17-30.

THINK not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. 18. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. 19. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. 21. Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: 22. But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council; but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire. 23. Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; 24. Leave there thy gift before the altar,

and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. 25. Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. 26. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing. 27. Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time Thou shalt not commit adultery: 28. But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. 29. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. 30. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

-----

### *Prayer.*

Father of all the families of the earth, help us now to draw near to Thee with the loving trust of little children, with the



deep reverence of creatures in the presence of their Creator. We adore Thee and worship Thee for Thine infinite perfections -- for Thine almighty power, for Thine all-searching wisdom, for Thine unapproachable majesty; but above all, we adore and worship Thee for Thy wondrous love to our fallen race, manifested in the gift of Thy dearly beloved Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. We confess before Thee that we are not worthy of the least of all Thy mercies toward us. We have erred and strayed from Thy ways like lost sheep; we have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts; we have offended against Thy holy laws; we have left undone those things that we ought to have done, and we have done those things that we ought not to have done, and there is no health in our souls. Thou, who readest our secret hearts, only knowest how sinful we are. We confess before Thee our sins of thought, word, and deed, whether remembered or forgotten now. And we beseech Thee to enable us to make such full and true confession unto Thee that Thou mayest be able, according to Thy promise, to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Oh! deal not with us after our sins, neither reward us after our iniquities. We thank Thee that thou hast given us to know Thee in Thy word, and to hope in Thee through Thy Son our Saviour. We entreat Thee to make us more thankful for all Thy mercies toward

us. Let not our common blessings pass unheeded by us. We praise and thank Thee for the great gift of life, and for its continuance, day by day, in so much peace, and health, and comfort. We bless Thee for all those gifts of the earth which Thou givest us so richly to enjoy. We bless Thee for the ties of kindness and affection, for the mutual joys of loving hearts and pleasant homes; but far more deeply would we bless Thee for Thine assurances of pardon to them that repent, and for the promise of eternal glories to them that serve thee, offered in the gospel of our blessed Saviour. Grant, we beseech Thee, that we may rightly use those high privileges that Thou hast bestowed upon us. May we rest our hopes and fix our eyes on Christ, and Christ alone. In work or in leisure, in sorrow or in joy, in sickness or in health, in poverty or in wealth, in success or in failure, may we lift up our eyes to no man, save to Jesus only.

And, while we pray for ourselves, and for those most dear to us in our own family, we would not be unmindful of others removed further from our ken. Specially we pray for that Royal Lady whom Thou hast called to the sovereignty of these realms. Endue her, O King of kings, with all the graces which adorn the monarch and sanctify the Christian, that her earthly crown may hereafter be exchanged for a heavenly crown. And, O Lord of lords, give to all in high places the desire to seek Thy glory and the good of Thy

people. Guide the lords of the council, the nobility, the magistrates, and rulers of our land, giving them grace to execute justice and to maintain truth. Let Thy blessing descend also on all Thy ministering servants in this and other lands, and on all who in every place seek to guide men into the love of Thy blessed Son. Finally we commend to Thy fatherly care all who are in sickness, sorrow, or trial of any kind; and we entreat Thee to guide them through the waves of this troublesome world, that in the end they may come to the land of everlasting life.

And now, O our God, pardon, we beseech Thee, the ignorance, and coldness, and carelessness of our prayer to Thee. Withhold from us what we have asked amiss; bestow upon us what we have forgotten or neglected to ask. O hear us, not for our own sakes or our own deservings, but for the worthiness of Thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O GRACIOUS God, and most merciful Father, who hast vouchsafed us the rich and precious jewel of Thy holy word, assist us with Thy Spirit, that it may be written in our hearts to our everlasting comfort, to re-form us, to renew us

according to Thine own image, to build us up and edify us into the perfect building of Thy Christ; sanctifying and increasing in us all heavenly virtues. Grant this, O Father, for Jesus' sake. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm xxviii. 1, 2-6, 7.*

Lord, teach us how to pray aright,  
With reverence and with fear!  
Though dust and ashes in thy sight  
We may, we must, draw near.

We perish if we cease from prayer,  
O grant us power to pray!  
And when to meet Thee we prepare,  
Lord, meet us by the way.

Give deep humility, the sense  
Of godly sorrow give;  
A longing lowly confidence,  
To hear thy voice and live;

Faith in the only Sacrifice  
That can for sin atone;

To rest our hopes, to fix our eyes,  
On Christ and Christ alone.

ISAIAH LII. 13-15.

BEHOLD, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. 14. As many were astonished at thee: (his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men;) 15. So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.

MATTHEW XVII. 1-8.

AND after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, 2. And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. 3. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. 4. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us

make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. 5. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. 6. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. 7. And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. 8. And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only.

-----

### SERMON XIII.

“AND WHEN THEY HAD LIFTED UP THEIR EYES, THEY SAW NO MAN, SAVE JESUS ONLY.” -- Matt. xvii. 8.

WHAT a blessed sight! I would, that it might said of us, in all the circumstances and seasons of our life, that we saw no man, save Jesus only.

The words were first said of Peter, and James, and John, the three chosen witnesses whom Jesus took with him to the high mountain, when, to strengthen their faith and to nerve them for the coming trial of his own death, he suffered them for a brief space to gaze on the glory which, during his life on earth, was veiled by that robe of flesh

which he wore for our sakes. They saw his face shine as the sun! They saw his raiment white as the light! They saw *Moses*, the great lawgiver of their nation, and *Elias*, the chief of all their prophets, appear in glorified bodies to bear testimony to the divine character of their Master; and then, while a bright cloud overshadowed them, the voice of God declared, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him."

When God spake of old time to the Hebrews at Sinai, and gave them the ten commandments -- speaking out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice -- the people were so terrified that they said, "If we hear the voice of the Lord our God any more, then we shall die." And in like manner, on the Mount of Transfiguration, when the disciples heard the same voice, "they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only."

Again I say, would that this sentence were true of us in every circumstance and season of our life. Happy should we be if it could be truly said of us in our daily business, in our common-place work, in our ordinary every-day interchanges of word and deed.

When the workman is tempted to waste his employer's substance, or the time which is his property, and says to

himself, "*There is no one to see, nobody will know,*" he would be checked if he remembered and realized the truth, that he in absolute reality owes his duty to no man, but to Jesus only -- Jesus, who for thirty years sustained the workman's lot, and put dignity for ever on honest toil! When the tradesman stoops to dishonest trickery, and salves his conscience with the thought (which is probably a lie) that "*everyone does it*" -- he should remember, that though he may deceive his customers, there is one with whom he has yet to do; one who promises *His* favour, which alone is life, to those who have an honest and true heart: the final Judge is no man, but Jesus only.

But it is not in the life of the workman or the trader alone that the thought of a present Jesus would check sin, and strengthen men against temptation; it would do so in every place, in every time. In society, it would save us from that fear of man which so often bringeth a snare, if we could even feel that the real person for whose opinion we have to care, is no man, but Jesus only! In solitude, it would prevent our yielding to sloth, or to fretfulness, or to self-satisfaction, if we bore in mind that he who searcheth our hearts, who knoweth our every need, or every weakness, is no man, but Jesus only!

But not only for this world's business, and behaviour, and temperament is this thought a tried and precious one.



In the matter of our souls' salvation, blessed are they who see *no man*, but Jesus' only.

Perhaps, one reason why our Lord's transfigured glory was so soon withdrawn may have been, that the disciples were inclined to rest too much on it. In the beginning of the chapter before this, we are told that the Pharisees and Sadducees had come to their Master, and desired him that he would show them a sign from heaven. Jesus had sternly refused. He had said to these men who boasted of their piety and learning -- "A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas."

The disciples would see the hatred and rage, shown in looks of contempt and words of scorn, which this rebuke would call forth; and they would naturally desire that the face of their Master, shining as the sun, the raiment white as the light, might be given as a sign to silence these insulting foes. But their Master would not have it so. He gave them a glimpse of his glory, but he would not allow them to rest on *it*, but on *himself* in the human nature which he had assumed; and so, "when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only."

There is a danger, especially for the young, in letting their religion be based on mere regard and attachment to a minister or religious friend. This is natural, but not wise or safe. Regard for any person may wane; when we know

them better, we find blemishes which we did not see at first, and then there is danger lest our religion suffer or die, because founded on so insecure a basis. Or, perhaps, he, who is so trusted, falls into some grievous sin -- for Satan has always his fiercest temptations for ministers and those who influence others for good, because, if they fall, they bring down others with them. Wherefore, put not your full trust in man or in minister; use their teaching as far as you may, but do not lean on them, or on any human stay. In the matter of your soul's salvation, fix your heart and hope on no man, save on Jesus only.

Again, in the day when we are burdened with the sense of sin, may we look to no man, save Jesus only!

The memory of sin must always make us sad; we must always, to the end of our days, look back on our sin with shame, and sorrow, and pain; but if we look to no man, save Jesus only, we have no room to despair: we are assured of the immediate pardon of our sin.

What else can we understand by those words of St. Paul, when, preaching at Antioch, he said -- "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things." It is not said, *may* possibly be justified -- *shall be* justified at some future time -- but, *are* justified now. It is no presumption to

believe God; and yet his word declares, that a sinner who casts his whole trust on the sacrifice of Christ, is at once, in this world, delivered from the burden and guilt of his past sin.

The same blessed truth appears from those words, “If Christ be not raised, your faith is in vain; ye are yet in your sins.” But Christ *is* raised, therefore, it is not a vain thing to trust in him; and whosoever does *so* trust in him, is not in his sins. And believing this, we need not despair on account of past sinfulness; we may gratefully accept the assurance of cancelled guilt, if determined to see no man, save Jesus only!

But besides sin, *sorrow* often makes the people of God to go in heaviness.

In the hour of heart-break and of bitter grief, may we be able to recall the words of the text, and to take comfort from the thought, that though men are miserable comforters, yet the Son of man, our unseen Friend, is able to bind up every wound.

I have read somewhere of a Christian widow who had given herself over to uncontrolled and continued lamentation, and who refused to be comforted for her beloved, because he was not, but who was recalled to calmness by the touching question of her little child -- “Mother, is Jesus dead?”

May that child-saying teach us; and when the waves of trial beat in upon our spirits, when all is darkness, and gloom, and wretchedness within us and around us, may we remember that Jesus is not dead; and may we rise up to our duties with cheerfulness and resignation, fixing the eye of our minds on no man, save Jesus only. And if this be so with us in sorrow, then, in the hour of our own death, we will have the One Friend with us, who can go down with us into the dark valley, where all other friends must leave us.

When Bishop Beveridge was on his death-bed, his memory failed so completely, that he did not know any of his nearest relations. His chaplain said, "Bishop Beveridge, do you know me?" "Who are you?" was the answer. His own wife asked, "Do you know me?" "Who are you?" Being told that it was his wife, he said he did not know her. "Well," said one near, "Bishop Beveridge, do you know Jesus Christ?" "Jesus Christ?" he replied, reviving as if the name had acted on him as a charm. "O yes, I have known him these forty years. He is my only hope."

When our time comes to depart to the place of peace, may we, in like manner, see no man, save Jesus only!

But, if the friendship of Jesus is to abide with us when flesh, and heart, and mind are failing, it must be cherished in the years of health and vigour.

It is in the sanctuary of God, in the united prayer and praise of his people, specially at the sacred table, which the

love of Jesus enjoined should be spread in order to help us to quicken our love to him by the constant remembrance of his death, that we press on in upon our hearts the love of our unseen Friend.

And lastly, if Jesus be with us loved and trusted here, not only will he comfort us in sorrow, and uphold us in the hour of death, but in the day of judgment. He then, sitting on the great white throne, clothed with the raiment white as the light, his countenance as when the sun shineth in his strength, he shall then say to us, "Fear not; come, ye blessed children of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

God grant that in that most solemn day, for which all other days were made, we may lift up our eyes with loving trust, and not with terror and despair, unto that throne where we see no man, save Jesus only.

-- J. ERSKINE CLARK, M.A.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

### OF WONDERS WROUGHT BY A STAFF.

I HAVE told you all about the child Moses, how he was born in Egypt at a time when the king had given orders to

kill all the boy-babes of the people of Israel; and how the king's daughter, coming to bathe, found him, and took pity on him, and had him taken care of, and brought him home by and by to the palace, and brought up as her own son; and how he grew to be a very wise, brave man. I must now tell you what happened to him after he was about forty years old.

Moses, in the palace, had not forgotten his own people. But at the time of which I am now to speak he had gone to see them, and was much vexed by the cruelties he saw them suffering. So, when all the people about the court were thinking how he would one day come to be king, he surprised them by refusing "to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter." God was moving his heart to be the deliverer of his people, and he did not care for all the power and riches of Egypt. He would rather be God's servant to set Israel free. One day, when his heart was glowing with this desire, thinking that now the time was coming for letting the people know that God was going to save them by his hand, he went out among them; and seeing an Egyptian beating an Israelite, he was moved to go near, and slay the cruel wrong-doer, and set the Israelite free. He thought this would let the people see what God had raised him to do. So the next day, seeing two of them quarrelling, he went near, and tried to make peace, saying to them that they should not strive, for they were brethren. But the one who

was in the wrong spoke back to him angrily, and said, Who made you our judge? Will you kill me, as you did the Egyptian yesterday? On this Moses' faith failed him. He thought that the people were not ready to have him as their deliverer, and that his putting the Egyptian to death was getting so talked about that it would be sure to come to the ears of the king. So he fled from the country, and went away into the land of Midian. There he made the acquaintance of one of the shepherd - chiefs of the place, and agreed to stay with him and keep his flocks. Jethro was this chief's name. He was very much pleased with Moses, and agreed that he should marry one of his daughters, which he did, and lived with his father-in-law for forty years. But I do not think that he was altogether forgetting his poor brethren in Egypt. At least, God was thinking both of them and of Moses, and when the set time came, he spoke to Moses, and sent him back to Egypt to deliver them from their bondage.

It happened this strange way: -- Moses had taken the flocks he was feeding to a great distance into the desert country, and had come along by the places where there was grass till he reached the skirt of Mount Horeb. Here his eye was taken with a very wonderful sight. He saw a bush all on fire, and yet it was not burned. So he said, I must go near and see this strange thing, how the bush can be in the flames, and yet not be burned up. But as he did so, a voice

spoke to him out of the midst of the fire, and he knew that God was there, and he hid his face for fear. Then God talked with him, and told him he was full of pity for his people Israel, who were so cruelly treated by Pharaoh, and that he had come to set them free. He bade Moses go back to them, and he would tell him what to do. Moses was not willing to go at first, but God would not allow him to make any excuse. Then Moses said, But the people will not believe that Thou hast sent me, and God gave him signs to show them. He made him throw his shepherd's staff on the ground, and it became a serpent; then he told him to catch it by the tail, and it became a staff as before. He made him also put his hand into his bosom twice, which when he did the hand came out the first time all white as snow with leprosy, and the second time was all right again. He told him also of another sign to give, if these did not convince the people. Moses could not refuse any longer, so he bade his father-in-law farewell, and set out with his wife and two sons that had been born to go into Egypt.

When he had finished his journey, and arrived among the people of Israel, he sent for their elders, and told them all that God had said to him, and how he was come from God to free them from their tyrant. He showed them the signs which God had bid him give them, and when they saw his staff become a serpent and then a rod again, and his hand grow leprous and then sound just by being put into his



bosom, they believed, and were very glad, and praised the Lord. After that Moses, along with a brother named Aaron, who was a little older than himself, went to King Pharaoh, and in the name of the Lord God of Israel, asked him to let the people go. But he said very profanely, I should like to know who the Lord God is, that I should mind him, or do as he wants me. Poor man, he did know before long. Only, at first it put him into a rage with the people to be asked to let them leave Egypt, and he gave orders to treat them more harshly than ever. It was a hard case for the Israelites, and tried their faith much to see their lot getting worse instead of better, and they began to complain to Moses, and to say it would have been well if he had not come to meddle in their affairs at all.

This sent Moses to God in prayer. Trials always do send good men to prayer. The answer came in a series of terrible judgments of Pharaoh, till at last in great fear he allowed the people to go. These judgments were wrought by Moses' staff, which, for these great signs, was called the rod of God. Of course it was God's power, not the rod, that did the wonders. But the stretching out of the rod was the token of God's great power being at hand and ready to work. The ten judgements are usually called the ten plagues. Here they are, named in order as they fell out: First, the river Nile, of which the Egyptians were very proud, was turned into blood. Next, all the land swarmed

with frogs. After that, the dust of the ground was turned into gnats, or some sort of small insects. The fourth plague came in the shape of swarms, probably, of beetles. The fifth was a cattle-plague. After that, a disease, causing sore boils, came on the Egyptians themselves. Then a terrible storm of thunder and lightning and hail swept over the land. Next, every thing left by the hail was eaten up by prodigious hosts of locusts. Then came a darkness, so thick that you could feel it with the touch, which lasted three days; all the time no one being able to move from his place for fear, and for the black night that was round him. Last of all, one night the angel of death went out through all Egypt, and slew every first-born person, high and low, so that there was not a house where there was not one dead. Then it was that King Pharaoh in a fright sent to Moses and Aaron, and bade them take the people away; and the Israelites, who had been getting ready beforehand, left Egypt with everything they had, never to come back.

The story of the first-born, and of Israel's going out of Egypt, is so wonderful, that it must be told in another place by itself. Here I will tell you of one other judgment sent on Pharaoh by the rod of God.

After his fright began to pass off, the king became sorry that he had yielded after all, and let the people go. So he resolved to chase them, and bring them back. He got ready, accordingly, a great host of chariots, and horsemen,

and soldiers, and set out in pursuit. And as he had heard that they had not gone the straight way into the wilderness, but had turned south, and were in camp on the west shore of the Red Sea, he made sure of taking them all captive again. When his army came in sight, the people of Israel felt very much afraid. They thought they could not escape, with the sea before them, and a great host behind. But God had told Moses what to do. He was to stretch the staff he had used in bringing the plagues over the sea, and divide it. He did so, and behold the waters were separated and driven back, and a broad dry road left for Israel to go through. All night they advanced by this strange highway, and in the morning were safe on the other shore. The king of Egypt and his host dashed in to the sea path after them, but God towards morning began to plague them, and terrify them, and they turned at last to flee; but not one of them escaped. How they perished you may see in the picture of the destruction of Pharaoh's host. It tells the story at a glance. See, there is Moses stretching out the rod over the sea. There are the great waves tumbling down on the Egyptian host. See how they vainly struggle in the waters. See the black wrath-storm over their heads. They cry, they sink, they perish! But high and safe, Israel are singing for wonder and joy -- "The Lord hath triumphed gloriously, the horse and his rider hath he cast into the sea."

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Can you find out in the picture the ark of God, and the pillar of fire?
2. Where are we told that Moses was forty years of age at the time this story begins?
3. What does the scripture say was the secret principle which led to Moses to choose helping his brethren, rather than ruling in Egypt?
4. Can you name two other good men who, like Moses, fled from their country for a time because their faith failed them?
5. Moses met Jethro's daughters, one of whom he married, at a well -- what other famous person first met his wife at a well also?
6. What doctrine of scripture was proved by the words God spoke from the midst of the burning bush?
7. Who was it that, for deceit, became all over a leper white as snow?
8. What other king blasphemed God, like Pharaoh, as if he were just like any idol-god of the nations?
9. Can you give four instances of good persons whom trouble led to prayer?

To remember the plagues of Egypt in order, commit to memory this couplet, or make one for yourselves: --

Blood, frogs, gnats, beetles, cattle-murrain dread  
[lice, fly-swarms]

Boils, hail storm, locusts, darkness, first-born dead.

CONSULT for answers to the questions -- Acts vii.; Heb. xi; 1 Sam. xxvii., 1 Kings xix; Gen. xxix; Luke xx.; 2 Kings v.; 2 Kings xix.; Gen. xxxii., 1 Sam i., 2 Chron. xxxii., and Dan.ii.

-----

### *PRAYER.*

O LORD, Thou art the God of the needy. Look down on peoples and persons that are suffering now from cruel hands of power. Teach the weak and the wronged to cry to Thee, and put their trust in Thee. Have pity on all that are toiling in weariness and almost despair, and cannot get enough to eat and wear. Put to shame all that for their own gain hold back the poor man's hire. Pity the slaves of Satan everywhere. Bind the strong one, Lord Jesus, for Thou art stronger than he, and spoil him of his goods. Teach us, O

Lord, to sing Thy praise for victory over all evil. To Thee  
be glory, world without end. *Amen.*

-----

## EVENING WORSHIP.

LORD of all power and might, who art the author and  
giver of all good things, graft in our hearts the love of thy  
name, increase in us true religion, nourish us in all  
goodness; and of Thy mercy keep us in the same, through  
Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm cvi. 1-5.*

SUN of my soul! Thou Saviour dear,  
It is not night if thou be near.  
Oh! May no earth-born cloud arise  
To hide Thee from thy servant's eyes.

When the soft dews of kindly sleep  
My wearied eyelids gently steep,  
Be my last thought, how sweet to rest  
For ever on my Saviour's breast.

Abide with me from morn till eve,

For without Thee I cannot live;  
Abide with me when night is nigh,  
For without Thee I dare not die.

If some poor wandering child of thine  
Have spurned, to-day, the voice divine,  
Now, Lord, the gracious work begin,  
Let him no more lie down in sin.

Watch by the sick: enrich the poor,  
With blessings from thy boundless store;  
Be every morner's sleep to-night,  
Like infant's slumbers, pure and light.

Come near and bless us when we wake,  
Ere through the world our way we take;  
Till in the ocean of Thy love  
We lose ourselves in heaven above.

### MATTHEW V. 22-30.

BUT I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in

danger of the council; but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire. 23. Therefore, if thou bring thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. 24. Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. 25. Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. 26. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing. 27. Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shall not commit adultery: 28. But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. 29 And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. 30. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

## 2 CORINTHIANS III.



DO we begin again to commend ourselves? Or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you? 2. Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: 3. Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart. 4. And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: 5. Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; 6. Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit : for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. 7. But if the ministration of death, written engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away; 8. How shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious? 9. For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. 10. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. 11. For if that which was done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious. 12. Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech; 13. And not as Moses, which put a vail over his

face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished; 14. But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ. 15. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart. 16. Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away. 17. Now the Lord is that Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. 18. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

-----

*Prayer.*

HEAVENLY Father, whose goodness has brought us to the close of another day, we again humbly seek Thy blessing. The shades of night have fallen now upon the world; let not any shade of unrepented sin remain to cloud our consciences, or to darken the last moments of a day which has brought us one step nearer to the eternal world. Forgive what thou hast seen amiss in us this day, and absolve us from our offences, that by Thy bountiful

goodness we may all be delivered, from the bonds of those sins which, by our frailty, we have committed. May that Lamb of God who died to take away the sins of the world, take away our sins for ever. Lighten our darkness, we beseech Thee, O Lord, and by Thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night. Preserve us from harm in those unconscious hours, when we are specially powerless to keep ourselves. May no danger come nigh our bodies, no evil and polluting thoughts defile our souls; may we be refreshed and strengthened by a sweet sleep for the labours and duties of another day, if we are spared to see it; or if in the night we wakeful lie, do Thou supply our souls with holy thoughts. Look down in thy especial mercy on those who cannot sleep, those who are tossing on beds of pain or languishing, and give them the consolations of thy Spirit, so that there may be no creature in adversity who doth not feel Thy comfort and compassion. Be Thou the friend of the friendless, the merciful reclamer of the wanderer, the strength of the weak and wavering, the support of them that suffer in a righteous cause.

Give success to every effort that is being made to lessen iniquity, to relieve distress, to enlighten the ignorant with that knowledge which is eternal life. Put it into our hearts, and into the power of our hands to seek to do our part that Thy way may be known on earth, through Jesus Christ our Lord. “Our Father, “ &c.

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

#### *Morning.*

**Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.**

The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her.

She will do him good, and not evil, all the days of her life.

Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come.

She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness.

Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.

Prov. xxxi. 10, 11, 12, 25, 26, 28.

#### *Evening.*

**Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives.**

Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or or putting on of apparel;

But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

1 Peter iii. 1, 3, 4.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.**

Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord.

Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.

The father to the children shall make known thy truth.

And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart;

And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

Prov. xxii. 6. Col. iii. 20, 21. Isa. xxxviii. 19. Deut. vi. 6, 7.

*Evening.*

**Observe and hear all these words which I command thee, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee for ever, when thou doest that which is good and right in the sight of the Lord thy God.**

What man is he that feareth the Lord: him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose.

His soul shall dwell at ease; and his seed shall inherit the earth.

For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring:

And they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water-courses.

Deut. xii. 20. Ps. xxv. 12, 13. Isa. xiv. 3, 4.

## **WEDNESDAY.**

*Morning.*

**Honour thy father and thy mother:**

Ye shall fear every man his mother and his father.

My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother:

For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.

My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother:

Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck.

Matt. xix. 19.      Lev. xix. 3.      Prov. i. 8, 9.      Prov. vi. 20, 21.

*Evening.*

**Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old.**

And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses.

And Joseph nourished his father, and his brethren, and all his father's household, with bread, according to their families.

If any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God.

Prov. xxiii. 22.      Gen. xlvii. 11. 12.      1 Tim. v. 4.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them.**

But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.

Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as little child, he shall not enter therein.

And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them,

Mark x. 13, 14, 15, 16.

*Evening.*

**At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?**

And Jesus called a little child unto him,

And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.

But who shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

Matt. xviii. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6.

**FRIDAY.**

*Morning.*

**And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in**



**the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the son of David; they were sore displeased,**

And said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?

Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones: for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.

Matt. xxi. 15, 16. Matt. xviii. 10.

*Evening.*

**A woman of Canaan cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.**

Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.

But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs.

And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.

Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

Matt. xv. 22, 25, 26, 27, 28.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.**

And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

Luke ii. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.

*Evening.*

**They found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.**

And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.

And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? Behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.

And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?

Luke ii. 46, 47, 48, 49.

# HOME PREACHER, OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

## FOURTEENTH WEEK.

### MORNING WORSHIP.

O LORD our God, Thou knowest all things, and Thou knowest that we now desire to worship Thee in spirit and in truth. Remove from our souls, we pray Thee, all that would distract and hinder us; and cause to be present, within us all, those thoughts and feelings which are necessary for acceptable service. May our minds and hearts be entirely and consciously under Thy guidance and control. Unto Thee, our Father in heaven, we now yield our spirits, in the name of Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

### HYMN, *or Psalm.* cxix. 11-16.

LAMP of our feet, whereby we trace  
Our path when wont to stray;  
Stream, from the fount of heavenly grace,  
Brook, by the traveller's way;

Bread of our souls, whereon we feed,  
True manna from on high;  
Our guide and chart, wherein we read  
Of realms beyond the sky;

Word of the everlasting God,  
Will of his glorious Son;  
Without thee how could earth be trod,  
Or heaven itself be won!

Lord, grant us all aright to learn  
The wisdom it imparts;  
And to its heavenly teaching turn,  
With simple, childlike hearts.

### NUMBERS XIII. 1-3, 17-21, 23-33.

AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, 2. Send thou men, that they may search the land of Canaan, which I gave unto the children of Israel: of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man, every one a ruler among them. 3. And Moses, by commandment of the Lord, sent them from the wilderness of Paran: all those men were heads of the children of Israel. 17. And Moses sent them to spy out the

land of Canaan, and said unto them, Get you up this way southward and go up into the mountain; 18. And see the land, what it is; and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they be strong or weak, few or many; 19. And what the land is that they dwell in, whether in tents, or in strong holds; 20. And what the land is, whether it be fat or lean, whether there be wood therein, or not; and be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land. (Now the time was the time of the first ripe grapes.) 21. So they went up, and searched the land from the wilderness of Zin unto Rehob, as men come to Hamath. 23. And they came unto the brook of Eschol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff; and they brought of the pomegranates, and of the figs. 24. The place was called the brook Eschol, because of the cluster of grapes which the children of Israel cut down from thence. 25. And they returned from searching of the land after forty days. 26. And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and shewed them the fruit of the land. 27. And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it. 28. Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled,

and very great: and moreover, we saw the children of Anak there. 29. The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south; and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains; and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan. 30. And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it. 31. But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we. 32. And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. 33. And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.

-----

*Prayer.*

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, giver of every good and perfect gift, help us now, we beseech Thee, to worship Thee in spirit and in truth. We thank Thee for the Sabbath day, for Thy holy word, for the revelation which Thou hast

given to us of Thyself as our Creator, Preserver, Provider, and Friend. We thank Thee for the invitation which Thou hast given to us and to all men, known to draw near to Thee to make known our requests and to pour out our hearts before Thee.

We are utterly unworthy to speak to Thee, or to hope for any favour from Thee; for we have wandered from thy ways like lost sheep. Thou hast nourished and cherished us as Thy children, but we have transgressed Thy holy law, and rebelled against Thy righteous government. We have not loved Thee with all our heart, and soul, and mind, and strength; we have not sought our happiness in communion with Thee and in obedience to Thy commands. We have worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator; we have said in our hearts to the Father of mercies, “Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways.”

Blessed be Thy holy name that Thou hast not granted this our wicked desire, nor left us to perish in our own corruption. Thou hast pitied us in our low estate, because thy mercy endureth forever. We bless Thee that where sin hath abounded, Thy grace hath much more abounded. We have impoverished and ruined ourselves, but Thou hast brought forth from Thy treasury the pearl of greatest price, wherewith to enrich us even unto boundless wealth. We praise Thee that Thou didst send Thy beloved Son as the good Shepherd, to seek and to save that which was lost.



We adore Thee that when He offered to lay down His life for us, Thou didst accept the sacrifice; Thou didst deliver Him up to death, even the death of the cross, and didst lay upon Him the iniquity of us all.

We magnify Thy name that Thou didst bring again from the dead that great Shepherd of the sheep, that Thou didst receive Him to glory, and set Him at Thine own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. We glorify Thee, O Redeemer of the world, that, being exalted to shed forth abundantly upon the children of men Thy Holy Spirit, to convince and to convert, to comfort and to purify their souls.

And now, O God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, hear our cry for complete deliverance from our sins, and entire conformity to Thy will. We know from Thy word that Thy will is our sanctification; help us to unite our will with Thine in the unceasing pursuit of holiness. Create in us a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within us. Cleanse us, we beseech Thee, from secret faults; keep back thy servants from presumptuous sins; let no iniquity have dominion over us. Fill our souls, O God our Father, with admiration of Thy character, as manifested in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ upon earth. Teach us to follow in his footsteps, to devote ourselves to His service, to show

forth His praise; beholding, as in a mirror, the glory of the Lord, may we be changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

We ask of Thee, our Father, to bless every member of this household. Grant that we may dwell together in peace and love, as fellow-members of Christ, and fellow-heirs of everlasting life. We pray for all the churches of Christ, that Thou wilt this day manifest Thy presence among them, when they are gathered together, in the name of our Saviour, to worship Thee and hear Thy word. Pour down upon them, we beseech Thee, showers of heavenly grace. Revive them, refresh them, enlighten and purify them, by the power of Thy Spirit. Bless all ministers of the gospel in this land, all missionaries of the cross among the heathen, all who preach or teach in the name of Jesus. Make them faithful, prayerful, and pitiful toward the souls that are ready to perish, and successful in winning multitudes to their Redeemer and Lord.

O God, be gracious to our native land, to our colonies, and to the whole British empire. O Lord, save the Queen, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and all the members of the royal family. Give wisdom, we beseech thee, to our statesmen and senators; establish the government of our country in the righteousness and peace, and make our nation a blessing to the world. O God, save the poor of the people, and provide for the children of the needy; may they

all know Thee as a father of the fatherless and a judge of the widows in Thy holy habitation. Look in compassion on the sick and upon all the suffering, the aged, and the helpless; grant to them peace and rest of soul amidst the weakness and pain of the body. May Thine afflicted children, who are pining for the privileges of the sanctuary, be enabled to bear with patience their detention at home. Manifest Thy presence to them in their own dwellings and give them a bright hope of an abundant entrance into Thine everlasting kingdom.

And now, O Father, we ask of thee to grant us thy blessing in all our meditations upon Thy holy word. Shine into our hearts by Thy Holy Spirit, to give us the light of the knowledge of Thy glory in the face of Jesus Christ. O gracious Spirit, Comforter divine, take of the things of God and show them unto us. Teach us, O Lord, to love that which Thou dost command, to desire that which Thou dost promise, and to expect, with humble confidence, the answer of these our prayers. We present our confessions, and supplications, and thanksgivings in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O LORD we thank Thee for the Holy Scriptures. Help us to receive into our hearts the truths hereby revealed, that they may be within us the seed of eternal life. Strengthen us that we may ever hold fast thy blessed word, so that it may bring forth fruit even a hundred fold to Thy honour and glory. Open now our minds to the teachings of Thy holy book, and give us the blessed influences of Thy Holy Spirit, for the sake of our beloved Saviour Jesus Christ.  
*Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* cxix. 15-18.

FATHER of all, in whom alone  
We live, and move, and breathe,  
One bright celestial ray dart down,  
And cheer thy sons beneath.

While in thy word we search for Thee,  
We search with trembling awe,  
Open our eyes, and let us see  
The wonders of thy law.

Now let our darkness comprehend,

The light that shines so clear;  
Now the revealing Spirit send,  
And give us ears to hear.

### ACTS XVI. 1-13.

THEN came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek: 2. Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. 3. Him would Paul have to go forth with him, and took and circumcised him, because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek. 4. And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem. 5. And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily. 6. Now, when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, 7. After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not. 8. And they, passing by Mysia, came down to Troas. 9. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: there stood a man of

Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. 10. And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them. 11. Therefore, loosing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis; 12, And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony; and we were in that city abiding certain days. 13. And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river-side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither.

#### ACTS XVII. 1-13.

NOW when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: 2. And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath-days reasoned with them out of the scriptures; 3. Opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ. 4. And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few. 5. But the Jews which

believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people. 6. And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also; 7. Whom Jason hath received: and these all do contrary to the decrees of Cesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus. 8. And they troubled the people, and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things. 9. And when they had taken security of Jason, and of the other, they let them go. 10. And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea; who, coming thither, went into the synagogue of the Jews. 11. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether these things were so. 12. Thereafter many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men not a few. 13. But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they came thither also, and stirred up the people.

-----

## SERMON XIV.

“AND THAT FROM A CHILD THOU HAST KNOWN THE HOLY SCRIPTURES WHICH ARE ABLE TO MAKE THEE WISE UNTO SALVATION THROUGH FAITH WHICH IS IN CHRIST JESUS.”

-- 2 Tim. iii. 15.

THESE words were addressed to Timothy in a letter written by the apostle Paul.

Our first acquaintance with Timothy is made through St. Luke in the Acts of the Apostles. In the sixteenth chapter of that book, the apostle Paul is represented as visiting Derbe and Lystra, and as meeting a certain disciple there named Timotheus. This was the second visit of Paul to these parts: *Was Timothy a fruit of the former visit?*

Paul calls Timothy “my own son in the faith,” and “my dearly beloved son;” but these terms of relation and of endearment may have reference to “the gift of God which was in Timothy by the putting on of the apostle’s hands” -- to the calling of Timothy to the ministry, and to his ordination, and to the service which he had rendered as a helper of Paul. Hence we read, Phil. ii. 22, “But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.”



Returning to the testimony of St. Luke we are informed that when Paul visited Derbe and Lystra for the second time, Timothy was a disciple and well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. So powerfully drawn was Paul to this young disciple, that he chose Timothy as a companion in his labours; and desiring that nothing might hinder the acceptableness of his services, Paul circumcised Timothy.

The mother of Timothy was a Jewess, but his father was a Greek. The mother was, however, a disciple when Paul became acquainted with her son, as was also the grandmother; so that this family presented the interesting spectacle of three generations disciplined to the Saviour. Thus in the second epistle of Timothy (i. 5) we read, “When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee which dwelt in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.”

The text carries us back to days in which Timothy was not disciplined to Jesus Christ. From a child Eunice’s son had not known our Saviour, but from a child he had known the Holy Scriptures. The writings of Moses and of all the prophets, and the book of Psalms, were read by Timothy during the years of his childhood -- read no doubt by his mother’s influence and under her guidance. We seem to see Eunice, in the midst of the idolatries of Lycaonia, leading the mind of her infant boy from the false gods, Mercury and

Jupiter, to the true God, Jehovah; storing the child's memory, not with the mythology of the ancient heathen, but with the poetry and history and prophecy of Holy Scripture. The father, it may be, looked at one of the heroes of Greece as the mould into which he would cast the character of his boy; the mother with her skilful fingers shaped it after models furnished by the sacred line of her ancestors. Her ambition for Timotheus was that he might be like Abel and David and Samuel and Josiah. The father's prophetic hopes, perhaps, clothed the lad with military honours; but Eunice, like Hannah, lent her son to the Lord. Grandmother and mother had, like Simeon and Anna, waited for Israel's Consolation, and Timothy was taught to watch for the Messiah as the anxious and sad in the night-watches wait for the morning. Happy son to have such a mother! Blessed mother to have such a son! Mothers who tread in Eunice's steps may hope to be partakers of Eunice's joy.

1. The first object inviting our attention is -- *The character given to the Old Testament Scriptures.*

They are "holy," sacred or consecrated to God. They are designed to make God known. Taking his existence for granted, and not attempting to prove it, the Scriptures exhibit the character of God. This they do largely by recording His actions. The history of creation shows the Creator: the account of the making of man exhibits his

Maker: the record of judgments reveals the Judge; and of mercies, the Father of all gifts. But the Scriptures also contain verbal descriptions of God himself. Originally man needed not this testimony; he knew God. Now a sense of the divine existence remains, but the knowledge of the divine attributes is lost. God throws himself into his words about himself, and thus the Scriptures are our guide in searching for God, and are “holy” because they thus direct us. In this respect there is a difference between God’s revealing works, and God’s revealing words. His works make God known, but this is not their exclusive or primary object. Hence we do not say, the “holy” heavens declare his glory. But because the revelation of himself found in the Scripture is the primary object of such words, these writings are called “holy” Scripture.

The Scriptures are designed not only to make God himself known, but also to reveal his will. What he would have us to do appears on every page. Everywhere we read, “Thou shalt,” and “Thou shalt not,” and therefore the book is “holy.” And these writings are “holy” because produced for the object of leading apostate men back to God. They exhibit God, not for the sake of showing to man a great sight. They reveal the will of God, not simply for imparting information, but that the prodigal may return to his father, and the sheep be restored to the fold. Hence in the Scriptures there is, as we all know, the revelation of an

atonement, and of a Mediator, and of a new and living way unto the Father. The Scriptures are an instrument of God, for God's special redemptive purpose and work.

These few remarks will suffice to remind us why the Scriptures are called "holy." They are written for objects immediately connected with God. They are not sacred to literature or to science, to the arts or to wealth. The Bible is not written for the arts or to wealth. The Bible is not written for the poet, though in it are poetic gems the like of which no un-Godmoved mind has conceived. The Bible was not written for the philosopher, though full of the divinest wisdom and profoundest knowledge, and discussing questions the broadest, deepest, highest, divinest, which can occupy created minds. The Bible is not written for the student of natural science, though alone narrating creation, and giving hints and clues of priceless value to the investigator of the works of God; nor for the historian though precious as a book of history beyond all comparison; nor for the politician, though expounding the only true and good political principles; nor for the merchant or trader or artificer, though a book profitable for all things. It deals with practical questions between God and man. The poetry of the Bible is a lyre strung and tuned by God, whose strings are touched by the fingers of God, whose sweet tones are the blessedness of God, and whose compass is the infinitude of God. The science and philosophy and history

of the Bible are like the gold and frankincense and myrrh which were laid at the feet of the Saviour: they are sacred to God, and they are like rivers which run into the sea--they find their end and issue in God. Holy Scriptures -- writings by God in which the “all in all” is God.

2. The Scriptures are “able to make wise unto salvation.” They contain all the information necessary to personal redemption. Salvation! this is the great necessity of our nature. The taint of sinfulness pollutes us; the poison of sin threatens us with destruction; our cleaving to sin enslaves us; the guilt of sin degrades us; and the punishment of sin is over our head as a storm cloud. Salvation is our great need. We have manifold and urgent necessities -- but salvation is our great need. When the flood was coming, *the* need to Noah and to his family was the ark. When Sodom was being destroyed, *the* need to Lot was a place of refuge. When Israel was groaning in Egypt, *the* need was the Exodus. The need of the sick is health, and of the captive liberty. And as God made Noah wise for the deliverance of Israel, so the Scriptures make us wise unto salvation.

The Scriptures tell us of our sin and of our need of salvation from sin. They define sin, describe it, record its entrance to our world, show its exceeding sinfulness and charge it upon us all.

They exhibit a scheme of salvation and a provision for salvation, and this chiefly by revealing of a God-given, personal, living Saviour. Him the Old Testament reveals by promise and by prophecy, in poetry and symbol; and all who saw him, all who looked unto him were saved. Hence the apostle adds -- "Wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

These, then are the characteristics of the book which Timothy knew from a child. The Scriptures with which he was acquainted were "holy" and "able to make wise unto salvation" -- sacred to God's purposes, and adapted to meet the great and urgent need of mankind.

"From a child thou hast known the holy scriptures."

II. Let us look secondly, *at that acquaintance with Holy Scripture which a child may attain.*

The word here rendered "child" is the same as that translated "infants" in Luke xviii. 15. "From a child means from the earliest years. So soon as possible Timothy heard, read and understood. Thou hast "known." This word has a very wide range of signification. The Scriptures may be *known* in the facts of their history and biography, and in the forms of their poetry and prophecy. But this is the lowest kind of knowledge. The words of a man, when he speaks truthfully and sincerely, contain the thoughts of the man, and thus the man himself. In like manner the word of God hath in it God -- his thoughts, his mind, himself. And to

know the thoughts, and mind, and end, and spirit, and character of God from the Scriptures, is the highest kind of knowledge.

What kind of knowledge of Scripture Timothy had as a child, I cannot tell. It may have been mere knowledge of the letter, it may have been such knowledge as made him ready for salvation, or it may have been knowledge involving salvation; but we assert that a child is capable of the highest knowledge -- highest, I mean, in kind, not, of course, in degree.

This assertion will variously affect different minds. Some will exclaim, "What a truism!" but such do not know that there are many Christian parents who have no faith in the piety of children, and in the salvation of the young; so that it is necessary to assert what appears self-evident. Others will remark, "This style of speech ignores the Spirit of God as the agent in salvation." We would respond, "God forbid." In full view of the need of the work of the Spirit of God, we say, that "from a child" the human being is capable of the highest knowledge of Holy Scripture.

1. There is nothing in a child, as such, to forbid this view. A child is ignorant, foolish, inexperienced, and weak in purpose; but its mind is accessible and free from prejudice. The seeds of sinfulness are in a child's nature, and the motions of sins are developed in action; but a child is less under the dominion of sin than an adult.

2. In Holy Scripture there is no lack of adaptation to a child. There are deep and wildly rushing rivers, which an elephant alone can ford; but there are still waters at which a timid lamb may drink. There is strong meat for men but there is milk for babes. There is bright light for the eagle-eyed, and soft morning light for the weak in vision. There are strong voices which would stir a giant, and gentle voices which would soothe a babe.

3. The working of the Holy Spirit is not limited to adults or to any age. He can bend the twig as well as rend the oak. He can cultivate the flower as well as prune the vine. He can carry the lambs in his bosom, while he leads the sheep. He can clothe the grass of the field in beauty, while He causes the palm tree to flourish and the cedar to grow.

4. The voice of the Holy Spirit saith not to the child, To-morrow, but to the child as to the adult, 'To-day if ye will hear his voice.' To-day, though to-day be but the small years of the child, and the years which are reckoned by units; To-day, though to-day be the day of play rather than work, and of merriment rather than mourning; To-day, though no great burden be carried, and no crushing sorrow be felt, and no grave responsibility be recognized; To-day, saith the Holy Ghost to the child, To-day.

5. And surely the lesson which Jesus taught when little children were brought to him, and his disciples rebuked



those who brought them, and Jesus said “Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not,” is this, that we are to bring all to Christ whom we can bring, and to despair of none whom we do lend to him.

6. Thanks be to God, however, we are not left to reason, or to imagination, or to speculation for light upon this subject; we have the testimony of facts; we have heard with our ears, many have told us; we have read with our eyes, many have recorded cases; we have seen with our eyes, and have known for ourselves, children who have known the Holy Scriptures, and who have personally been made wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. So that we may say, without doubt or reserve, that a child is capable of the highest knowledge of the Holy Scriptures.

III. Let us now consider, thirdly, *the blessedness or advantages of such knowledge.*

The lowest kind of knowledge of Holy Scripture is not without advantage. Even mere knowledge of the words may be of future use, as illuminating many objects, illustrating many subjects, suggesting thoughts, and exerting some kind of moral influence. The same remark will apply to a very partial understanding of the words of Scripture; they have given so much information upon the most important topics. It is true, the responsibility of the child has been increased, and thereby its guilt and danger if

it neglect the Holy Writings; but this remark applies to all advantages and to privileges of every class and kind. Every blessing tends to life or to death, tends to benefit or to curse the recipient; and we cannot keep good things from our fellows, because they may not use, or because they may abuse them.

It is a good thing to put a lamp into the hand of a benighted traveller, whether he use it or not as a light to his feet; it is good to give bread to the hungry, whether he eat it or reject it. To give is our duty and our privilege; and whenever we give, we may give in hope. If the lowest kind of knowledge of Scripture be an advantage, what shall we say of the highest kind?

If a child through the Holy scriptures be made wise unto salvation, we may declare of that child such things as the following: --

1. The child is delivered from the chief evil to which our human nature is heir. There are ills and evils beside sin; but these have their foundation in sin, and their root and trunk and stock in sin.

2. The child, when saved, is safe from all real future harm. He may lose property, but he cannot lose his soul; he may want the bread that perisheth, but he shall be fed with the bread of life; he may have disease of body, but shall know health of soul. No good will God withhold; all things shall work together for this child's good.

3. The chief need of the child's nature has been supplied -- a need, which if all other wants had been met, would remain an aching void, a restless craving, an agonizing hunger.

4. The child made wise unto salvation has received the best and greatest and most enduring gifts which even God can bestow. He has nobility of birth and of character because born of God; and made godly, he has wealth, for all things are his as an heir of God and a joint heir with Christ.

5. The child made wise unto salvation begins to live the eternal life -- that life so pure, that life so holy, that life so happy, that life so blessed, that life so godlike.

6. The multitude of sins avoided and of miseries escaped is very great. As is the child so is the youth, and as is the youth so is the man. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he shall not depart from it." Among the evils escaped are bitter recollections, and evil mental associations, which often bear down and half crush those who are saved later in life; also misspent time and wasted opportunities.

7. The child made wise unto salvation is being early qualified for usefulness in the world. He will be of those to whom Jesus said, "Ye are the salt of the earth, ye are the light of the world."

8. In such a child a deep and broad foundation is laid for stability of character. He promises to be like a tree

planted by the rivers of water which bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

We who have known the Scriptures from our childhood should be thankful, and careful of this treasure of knowledge. But let us not rest in literal information. The wheat avails us not while it stands ripe in the field, but only when it is reaped; nor does it serve us while it stands in the beauteous sheaves, but when it is threshed; nor does it serve us as grain, but when it is converted into meal and made into bread; nor even then does it serve us until eaten and digested, and assimilated and made part of our own blood and flesh. We may perish with the words of scripture within us, but imbibing their spirit we cannot die.

If we have so known the Holy Scriptures as to be made wise unto salvation then let us continue in the things which we have learned; hold fast the faithful word as we have been taught; retain our treasure of knowledge, and for it praise the Lord. But let us go on unto the perfection of knowledge. In the scriptures there are heights to which we have not mounted, even though we should have risen sometimes as on wings of eagles. In the Scriptures there are depths we have not fathomed, though we have sounded them with our longest heaviest line. In the Scriptures there are lengths and breadths we have not comprehended, even did our knowledge surpass that of all our fellows. Then let

us still read, mark, learn and inwardly digest God's most holy word; and while all should read the Scriptures, whether old or young, let these be especially the daily study of the young. A child is the offspring of God; a child is a creature born in sin; a child is a creature lost and wandering; the child is the father of the man; a child has an immortal destiny; a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame; a child may be ruined for ever; a child may be saved, and the knowledge of Holy Scripture is the means of making him wise unto salvation.

To parents and tutors who labour that their offspring and pupils may from childhood know the Holy Scripture we say, Account the Scriptures *able*. Add not to them, take not from them, but account the Scripture *able*. Teach the word of God with faith in it as *able*. God Almighty grant, that in every Christian household the Holy Scriptures may be known by the children from childhood as able to make wise unto salvation. -- SAMUEL MARTIN.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

OF MORE WONDERS WROUGHT BY THE STAFF.

AFTER the people of Israel escaped from the hand of King Pharaoh by having a road made for them through the Red Sea, while the waters returned upon the Egyptians and drowned all their host, they went on for several days to the south, and came by and by into that part of the desert which was near to Sinai. When God showed himself to Moses in the bush, and told him to go down to Egypt and lead the people out, he gave him a promise and a sign by saying, that when brought out, they would serve him on the mountain where he then appeared. No doubt Moses remembered this, as they journeyed toward Horeb. He was leading a very different flock now from that of his father-in-law's sheep, much more difficult to feed and manage; but God was with him, and though the duty was high and hard to do, he led them safely. Before they quite reached Horeb two wonderful things happened, where the rod of God was stretched out in power.

The first occurred in this way. The people had come to a plain called Rephidim, where they could find no water to drink. There were no streams, and no wells to be found in all the place. The cattle were weary, the children were crying, the men were searching everywhere in vain for water. Now that was a sad state of things with so many thousands of people, old and young, in a hot country, and with no prospect of relief. You hardly wonder that the

patience of the multitude gave way, and that they began to murmur. Yet they should have recollected how quite lately, only indeed a few days ago, God had come to their help on the shore of the Red Sea, and wrought a great wonder to save them. They should have trusted him now, and waited to see what he would do for them. Instead of that, however, they complained to Moses, clamouring for water, and saying Why did you bring us out of Egypt to kill us with thirst in this frightful place? So loud and vehement grew their cries at last, that Moses thought they would have set on him to stone him to death. That would have been very unjust and wicked and cowardly, but their burning thirst and the strong heat were almost making them mad. So Moses, as before, had to pray to God, and tell him in what evil case they were, and ask him what to do. Then God said to him to take his staff with him, and call out the chiefs of the host to go along with him, and take his stand, in the sight of the whole people, before a rock which stood at the bottom of one of the mountains. Then he was to lift the rod and strike the face of the rock with it, and there would burst out from it a stream of water, so that all the people should have a plentiful supply. Moses did exactly as God told him to do, and everything happened as he promised it would. The smitten rock sent out from its side quite a rush of water, which flowed throughout the camp; and all the people and all the cattle quenched their thirst,

and were satisfied. Besides, it is generally thought, that as long as the people needed it this river flowed along with them, winding about just as they journeyed, and gave them drink.

Don't you think it must have been a great sight to see how Moses, knowing how the power of God is able to do everything, went up to the rock, and brought with a stroke of his staff a sweet fresh stream from the flints? How must the elders standing by have wondered! What joy there must have been in the camp, when the glittering waters leaped forth, and began to flow on amidst the tents. How would the poor thirsty people run to catch the cool draught, dipping their vessels in the stream, or stooping down to lap it up with their hands, or plunging their very lips into the sweet wave. How would the children be delighted! Surely there would be songs again of praise again in the camp of Israel, and let us hope there were not a few persons who confessed to God and to Moses how impatient they had been, and how little they had trusted their great Deliverer. Alas! If they did confess their sin, it was afterwards forgotten; for a number of years later, the people fell into the same fault when they had been brought again into a dry place without water, and they made Moses so angry with them, that he fell into sin, and was not allowed to go into the promised land.



But there was another wonder wrought by the staff in the same place, and that in a way very nice to think of. There was a nation of the name of Amalek that had possessions in that quarter, and did not like to see a large host of people coming near their borders. So they sent out an army to watch them, and try and molest them. This army had been hanging about the rear of the multitudes of the people of Israel, and killing stragglers, and weak and weary persons when they fell behind the rest. At last, when they saw them go into a plain where no water was to be had, they thought it would be a good time to attack them, and so came in great force to fight with them. When Moses found this he made his trusty servant Joshua put the armed men of the camp into good order, and lead them out to battle. He said, he himself would go up to the top of the hill, and stand there with the rod of God in his hand. He meant by that to be making prayer to God, and encouraging the soldiers as they fought below. For the lifting up of that rod was like saying to God, Lord thou art strong and mighty; arise and help us, and smite Amalek, as thou smotest Pharaoh: and it was like saying to the people, Remember what great things have been done by this rod of God, and trust his might, and fight bravely and without fear.

The battle began in the morning, and Moses, taking Aaron and Hur with him, went up, as he said he would do, to the top of the hill, and stretched out his staff upwards to

the sky. Now, I do not suppose the rod was very heavy; but if any of you have tried to hold out at arm's length even a light wand, and to keep it up for a considerable time, you will know how by and by the hand gets weary. So after Moses had kept the rod stretched high up for a good while, he felt getting very tired, and was obliged to let his arm fall. Then a strange thing happened. All the time the rod was seen high in the air, the soldiers under Joshua were beating back the foe; but the moment Moses let it down, Amalek began to get the better of Israel. Again Moses lifted the rod, and again Joshua was winning; but once more getting weary, and letting the staff sink, he saw Amalek pushing the people under Joshua back again. This happened several times. When Aaron and Hur saw it, and found that Moses, from heaviness of hand, and perhaps from wavering faith too, thinking that Israel who had not been trained to war must be beaten, was not able to hold his arm up, they found a large stone and asked him to sit down upon it. Then they stood beside him, one on his right and the other on his left, and took hold of his arm and propped it up with their hands, and so made it steady and strong. The result was that all the day through the rod was held up, and Joshua and his soldiers won the battle and slew a great many, and quite scattered all the host of Amalek. You see how good men help each other. Moses, Aaron, and Hur, stretching forth the rod of God were in fact holding a prayer meeting on the

mountain, appealing by a “threefold cord” of supplication that was not broken

After the battle Moses, who knew that the help of Israel had been from God, built an altar, and named it, the Lord my Banner. And there was such joy in the camp that night. But God was very angry with the Amalekites for attacking the people “when they were weary and faint in the wilderness,” and said that he would remember to punish them more in after years. So he did; for he sent on of the kings of Israel to destroy them utterly. No doubt they had continued wicked, and foes of God’s people, and deserved to be cut off. For when men repent, God turns from his anger, and spares, although he may have threatened destruction. Amalek had not repented, and judgment came upon them, so that they were swept completely away.

There was a rod which, for a wonderful thing that happened in connection with it, was laid up beside the ark in the Holiest of all in the tabernacle and temple. Was it the rod of Moses, or another?

-----

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Can you find a passage where Moses is said to have led Israel like a flock of sheep?

2. Can you find a text where the waters which came from the rock are called a river?
3. Can you produce a verse, the words of which seem to imply that the waters from the rock followed the people of Israel in their wanderings?
4. Where do we read of Moses bringing water from the rock a second time?
5. Who was it that, ready to die for thirst, got drink from a hollow place cleft by God?
6. Where are we told that Amalek cut off the feeble stragglers of the host of Israel?
7. Do you remember a prayer-meeting where the people, before they left, had their prayer wonderfully answered?

ANSWERS to the foregoing will be found by consulting the following chapters -- Ps xxxvii.; Ps. cv.; 1 Cor. x.; Num. xx.; Judges xv.; Deut. xxv.; Acts xii.

-----

### *Prayer.*

O GOD, we thank Thee for rains and streams, which give us water to drink. We adore the wisdom and goodness of Thy plan for watering the earth when it is dried. We rejoice that for thirst of the soul thou provides living water.

May we get this also from the hand of Jesus. May we have it in us a springing well! Hasten, O Lord, the day when the thirsty nations may drink of it. Let the blessed waters of salvation flow forth into all lands, north, south, east, and west. Let men, freely invited, come in crowds and drink. Lord the fountain of life is with Thee. Give us to drink here on earth of the river of Thy pleasures, and in heaven to dwell beside the crystal flood which proceedeth from Thy throne, and the throne of the Lamb. *Amen.*

-----

## EVENING WORSHIP.

LORD GOD ALMIGHTY! with whom is no variableness, nor shadow of turning, and from whom cometh every good and perfect gift, we believe that Thou art with us now. Make us all conscious that Thou art here, and implant in our hearts such a love of Thy name, as that Thy presence may always be a source of delight to us, and the thought of Thee work in us a growing likeness and conformity to Thine image, as manifested to us in the character of Thy dear Son. We ask this for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* cv. 1-5.

COMMAND thy blessing from above,  
O God, on all assembled here;  
Behold us with a Father's love,  
While we look up with filial fear.

Command thy blessing, Jesus, Lord;  
May we thy true disciples be;  
Speak to each heart the mighty word;  
Say to the weakest, "Follow Me."

Command thy blessing in this hour,  
Spirit of Truth, and fill this place  
With wounding and with healing power,  
With quickening and confirming grace.

With Thee and thine for ever found,  
May all the souls who here unite,

With harps and songs thy throne surround  
Rest in thy love, and reign in light.

PSALM LXXVIII. 40-57.

HOW oft did they provoke him in the wilderness, and grieve him in the desert! 41. Yea, they turned back, and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel. 42. They remembered not his hand, nor the day when he delivered them from the enemy: 43. How he had wrought his signs in Egypt, and his wonders in the field of Zoan. 44. And had turned their rivers into blood; and their floods, that they could not drink. 45. He sent divers sorts of flies among them, which devoured them; and frogs, which destroyed them. 46. He gave also their increase unto the caterpillar, and their labour unto the locust. 47. He destroyed their vines with hail, and their sycamore-trees with frost. 48. He gave up their cattle also to the hail, and their flocks to hot thunder-bolts. 49. He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending evil angels among them. 50. He made a way to his anger; he spared not their soul from death, but gave their life over to

the pestilence; 51. And smote all the first born of Egypt; the chief of their strength in the tabernacles of Ham:

52. But made his own people to go forth like sheep, and guided them in the wilderness like a flock. 53. And he led them on safely, so that they feared not; but the sea overwhelmed their enemies. 54. And he brought them to the border of his sanctuary, even to this mountain, which his right hand had purchased. 55. He cast out the heathen also before them, and divided them an inheritance by line, and made the tribes of Israel to dwell in their tents. 56. Yet they tempted and provoked the most high God, and kept not his testimonies; 57. But turned back, and dealt unfaithfully like their fathers: they were turned aside like a deceitful bow.

### HEBREWS III. 7-19.

WHEREFORE (as the Holy Ghost saith, To-day, if ye will hear his voice, 8. Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: 9. When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. 10. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and thy have not known my ways. 11. So I sware in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.) 12. Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in



departing from the loving God. 13. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To-day; lest any one of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. 14. For we are made partakers of Chris, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.

-----

### *PRAYER.*

OUR Father who art in heaven, behold us with tender compassion and loving-kindness as we now address Thee. We would call upon our souls, and all that is within us, to bless and praise Thy holy name. If we would declare and speak of all Thy benefits, they are more than can be numbered. Every hour comes to us winged with new mercies, bearing to us some new message of love and faithfulness from our Creator and Preserver. For the bounties of Thy providence, O God, we praise Thee. For our reason, our senses, and for every faculty of mind and body, we thank Thee. For food, clothing, the comforts of our home, and for all the enjoyments of daily life, we bless Thee.

But above all, we magnify Thee for the provision which Thou hast made for our salvation and immortal life. This day of rest is the memorial of Thine unspeakable love in the

redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ. We adore Thee for Thy kindness in making known to us the gospel of Thy grace; in giving to us Thy word in our own language, with full liberty to read it and to speak of it to others. For all the blessings, temporal and spiritual, which have been conferred upon our country through the possession of the Scriptures, we give Thee humble and hearty thanks.

We would now ask of Thee, O God, to look in compassion upon other nations of the world which are destitute of the privileges bestowed upon us. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee. Darkness still covers many parts of the earth, and gross darkness Thy people. We mourn to think of the dark places of the earth which are full of the habitations of cruelty. Great Sun of Righteousness arise, and shine upon all mankind with healing in thy beams. Let the gods that are no gods perish from off this earth, and from under these heavens. Break the chains of spiritual despotism, we beseech Thee, wherever the souls of men are held in bondage. Destroy the power of priestcraft and superstition, and make all men free with the glorious liberty of the children of God. May the Prince of Peace put an end to war, slavery, oppression, violence, and wrong in all the earth. Hallowed be Thy name, O God our Father, in all the world; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done in earth, even as it is in heaven.

We pray for all Thy servants who, on this day, are labouring for the good of others, by preaching or teaching in the name of Jesus. Enlighten and strengthen them, we beseech Thee, by the power of Thy Spirit, so that they may commend the truth to every man's conscience as in the sight of God. May many youthful hearts among those who receive instruction from pious parents or from Sunday school teachers, be on this day led to Christ. May many who have grown up in sin, now be brought to repentance and on with Thee, through faith in the Lamb of God. Smile, O Lord, in mercy upon the efforts of those who visit from house to house -- circulating the Scriptures, or distributing religious tracts, or directing the sick and the dying to the divine Redeemer of the world. Grant to all these Thy servants, we beseech Thee, faith and patience, courage and hope, to toil in Thy vineyard; and cheer every heart among them, if it please Thee, with some tokens of success.

Many of Thy children are laid aside from active exertion in promoting the kingdom of Christ, by various afflictions. We pray for them, that Thou wilt graciously support and comfort them. Help them to honour Thee by patient endurance of trial and suffering; may they abound in prayer through the power of the Holy Ghost; and by means of their intercessions in the name of Christ, may rich blessings descend from heaven upon the church and the world.

And now, O our Father, God of light and love, breathe into our souls the breath of heavenly life, and fill us with the Spirit of Thy Son. May the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. On this Sabbath evening may we, by faith, enter into Thy rest. Set us free, we beseech Thee, from worldly cares, distracting thoughts, and the temptations of Satan. Deliver us from everything which would hinder us in Thy worship, and prevent our profitable meditation on Thy Word. “Our souls cleave unto the dust: quicken us according to Thy word.” The earth, O Lord, is full of Thy mercy: teach us Thy statutes.” “Thy Spirit is good: lead us into the land of uprightness.” Help each one of us, O God, in the duties of daily life to honour Thee, to follow the example of our Lord and Saviour, to show forth Thy praise by our conduct and conversation. As members of one household, may we love each other with a pure heart fervently, and constantly seek to promote each other’s welfare and happiness. In all our ways may we acknowledge Thee, and do Thou direct our paths. Whenever we are called to pass through trial and distress, give us grace, we beseech thee, to bear affliction patiently, to believe in Thine infinite love, and to give thanks for Thy chastening mercy. Teach us to set our affections on things above. Help us to live as strangers and pilgrims on the earth -- as sojourners with Thee, and as citizens of the new Jerusalem, having our treasure and our

heart in heaven. Lord of the Sabbath, on the evening of Thine own day, we ask of Thee to give us some foretaste of the heavenly rest. May we now feel that our life is hid with Christ in God, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And when our days on earth are ended, may we then, O heavenly Father, fall asleep in Jesus, awake in the eternal world with Thy likeness, behold Thy face in righteousness, and so may we be for ever with the Lord. All that we ask is in the name of Jesus, to whom, with Thee, O Father and the eternal Spirit, be all honour and glory, world without end.  
*Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

*Morning.*

**Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.**

He also shall be my salvation.

For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:

And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:

Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed with me.

My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

Job xiii. 15, 16.    Job xix. 25, 26, 27.    Ps. lxxiii. 26.

*Evening.*

**Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.**

And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! For then would I fly away, and be at rest.

Lo, then would I wander far off and remain in the wilderness. Selah.

I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest.

I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.

Ps. xxiii. 4.

Ps. lv. 6,7,8.

Ps. xci. 2.

**TUESDAY.**

*Morning.*

**Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.**

For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.

As for man, his days are as grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth;

For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.

But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children.

For the Lord is a God of judgment: blessed are all they that wait for him.

Ps. ciii. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17.      Isa. xxx. 18.

*Evening.*

**Thou shalt weep no more; he will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it he will answer thee.**

And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers;

And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand and when ye turn to the left.

Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.

Isa. xxx. 19, 20, 21. Jer. xxxiii. 3.

## WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.**

Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people; for all the earth is mine.

For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for?

Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen.

Exod. xix. 4, 5. Deut. iv. 7, 9.

*Evening.*

**For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.**

For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Good and upright is the Lord; therefore will he teach sinners in the way.



All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.

Rom. x. 12, 13.

Ps. xxv. 8, 9, 10.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates:**

At his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it: lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee.

Thou shalt not rule over him with rigour, but shalt fear thy God.

Deut. xxiv. 14, 15.

Lev. xx. 43.

*Evening.*

**Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called.**

Art thou called being a servant? Care not for it; but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather.

For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's free man: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant.

Ye are bought with a price: be not ye the servants of men.

Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God.

1 Cor. vii. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24.

## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.**

Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow: for what is our life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.

But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil.

Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

Prov. xxvii. 1 James iv. 14, 15, 16, 17.

*Evening.*

**Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty:  
neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things  
too high for me.**

Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child  
that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned  
child.

Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he  
that shall humble himself shall be exalted.

But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of  
a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.

Ps. cxxxi. 1, 2.      Matt. xxiii. 12.      Isa. lxvi. 2.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.**

He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious  
seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his  
sheaves with him.

In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening  
withhold not thine hand; for thou knowest not whether shall  
prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be  
alike good.

Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears.

And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.

Ps. cxxvi. 5, 6.      Eccl. xi. 6.    Acts xx. 19.    John iv. 36.

*Evening.*

**I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant.**

Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all.

Now therefore, our God, we thank thee and praise thy glorious name.

But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? For all things come of thee, and of thine own have we give thee.

For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding.

Gen. xxxii. 9.      1 Chron. xxix. 12, 13, 14, 15.

# HOME PREACHER, OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

FIFTEENTH WEEK.

## MORNING WORSHIP.

O GOD, whose blessed Son was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil, and make us the sons of God and heirs of eternal life; grant us, we beseech Thee, that, having this hope, we may purify ourselves, even as He is pure: that when He shall appear again, with power and great glory, we may be made like unto Him in His eternal and glorious kingdom, where with Thee, O Holy Ghost, He liveth and reigneth, ever one God, world without end.

*Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* cxix. 113-117.

FATHER, whate'er of earthly bliss  
Thy sovereign will denies,  
Accepted at thy throne of grace,  
Let this petition rise:

“Give me a calm, a thankful heart,  
From every murmur free;

The blessings of thy grace impart,  
And make me live to Thee.

Let the sweet hope that Thou art mine,  
My life and death attend;  
Thy presence through my journey shine,  
And crown my journey's end!"

#### NUMBERS XIV. 1-21.

AND all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night. 2. And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron; and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or, would God we had died in this wilderness! 3. And wherefore hath the Lord brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and children should be a prey? Were it not better for us to return into Egypt? 4. And they said to one another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt. 5. Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel, &c.

-----

## *Prayer.*

HEAVENLY FATHER, we thank Thee for the sabbath-day. We thank Thee that Thou has consecrated one day out of seven to be kept holy unto Thyself. We desire to regard it as a token of Thy love to us, that Thou requirest this at our hands. May we show our love to Thee by a simple child-like obedience to Thy loving command. This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it. May we call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable, not thinking our thoughts, but Thine; not doing our works, but those which please Thee. May we be in the Spirit on the Lord's day -- in the spirit of true devotion, of deadness to this present evil world, and of intentness on the one thing needful.

Manifest Thyself, we beseech Thee to us this day, in all the riches of Thy grace. May Thy presence go with us, and do Thou give us rest. Cause all Thy goodness to pass before us. We beseech Thee, show us Thy glory. Show us the light of Thy countenance. Shine into our hearts. Shine upon our path. Go before us and may we hear Thy voice and follow Thee.

We thank Thee for the sabbaths gone by in which we have in some measure realized Thy love, and understood how true it is that Thou hast never said to any of the



weakest of Thy people, Seek my face in vain. O Lord, to us belong shame and confusion of face. It is not merely that we confess, and deplore as we confess, the sin in our hearts, in our thoughts, in our words, and in our lives; but this specially we desire to mourn over that while we know Thee to be so full of love, while our eyes have been opened to see somewhat of the beauty of Emmanuel, our love to Him should be so cold and barren. God be merciful to us sinners. Give us real, deep, and godly sorrow for all our sins -- our sins of ignorance and sins of presumption; our sins when we were in darkness, and our sins when the light has shone upon us; our sins which bring dishonour on our Christian name; our sins which, if hidden from others, are known to ourselves; our sins which, before the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. O forgive all. Blot them out. Cover them. Cast them behind Thy back, into the depths of the sea. Remember them no more.

Father, Thou wilt hear us and forgive, for hast not Thou sent Thy Son into the world to seek and save lost souls? In His name alone we ask forgiveness. All our hopes of pardon spring from the cross of Christ. Blessed be Thy name for His death and passion, His glorious resurrection and ascension, and for His unceasing intercession above. O wash us in His blood. Cover us with His righteousness. Regard us as one with Him. Look on us in the face of Thine anointed and give us the unspeakable

joy of the man whose unrighteousness is forgiven, and whose sin is covered.

And now, Lord, send Thy Holy Spirit into our hearts that He may sanctify us wholly to Thy service this day, that in private we may commune with Thee and be still, and that in public we may be among the true worshippers who worship Thee in Spirit and in truth. Pour out of the same Spirit on all the assemblies of Thy people, this day, throughout the world. May the windows on high be opened, and such a blessing poured forth upon them as there shall not be room enough to receive it. Touch the lips of Thy ministering servants this day, as with a live coal from off Thine altar. May they, as ambassadors for Christ, diligently preach the word, and duly administer the godly discipline thereof. And may that word have free course, and be glorified, may it be brought home to many souls, quickening and converting them by the grace of Christ, so that He may see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied, and that there may be joy in heaven over many sinners that repent. And may Thy people, everywhere, be built up in their most holy faith. May great grace be on all those that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity; and make Thy way to be known on earth -- Pour out of Thine infinite and loving mercies on all dear to us; endue them with Thy Holy Spirit, enrich them with Thy heavenly grace, and bring

them to Thine everlasting kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O GOD, who hast prepared for them that love thee such good things as pass man's understanding, pour into our hearts such love toward Thee, that we, loving Thee above all things, may obtain Thy promises, which exceed all that we can desire, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm ix. 7-11.*

O draw me, Saviour, after Thee!  
So shall I run and never tire;  
With gracious words still comfort me,  
Be Thou my hope, my sole desire:  
Free me from every weight -- nor fear,  
Nor sin can come, If Thou art here!

What in thy love possess I not?  
My star by night, my sun by day,  
My spring of life when parched with drought,

My wine to cheer, my bread to stay;  
My strength, my shield, my safe abode,  
My robe, before the throne of God.

From all eternity with love  
Unchangeable Thou hast me viewed;  
Ere knew this beating heart to move,  
Thy tender mercies me pursued:  
Ever with me may they abide,  
And close me in on every side.

In suffering, be thy love my peace,  
In weakness, be thy love my power;  
And when the storms of life shall cease,  
Jesus, in that important hour  
In death as life be Thou my guide,  
And save me, who for me hast died!

### JOHN XXI. 15-25.

SO, When they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter,  
Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He  
saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee.

He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. 16. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. 17. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep. 18. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou was young thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch out thine hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. 19. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoke this, he saith unto him, Follow me. 20. Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee? 21. Peter, seeing him, saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? 22. Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me. 23. Then went this saying abroad among the brethren that that disciple should not die: yet, Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? 24. This is the disciple which testifieth of these things and wrote these things; and we know that his testimony is true. 25. And there are also many other things

which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.

### EPHESIANS III. 14-21.

FOR this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15. Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, 16. That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; 17. That Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, 18. May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height: 19. And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. 20. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, 21. Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

### 1 CORINTHIANS XIII.

THOUGH I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a

tinkling cymbal. 2. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. 3. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. 4. Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, 5. Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; 6. Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; 7. Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. 8. Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. 9. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. 10. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. 11. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. 12. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. 13. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

### 1 JOHN III. 10-21.

IN this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. 11. For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. 12. Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. 13. Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. 14. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren: he that loveth not his brother abideth in death. 15. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. 16. Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. 17. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? 18. My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed, and in truth. 19. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our heart before him. 20. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. 21.



Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God.

## SERMON XV.

“WHOM HAVING NOT SEEN, YE  
LOVE; IN WHOM, THOUGH NOW YE SEE HIM NOT, YET  
BELIEVING, YE REJOICE WITH JOY UNSPEAKABLE, AND FULL  
OF GLORY.” -- 1 Peter, i. 8.

THREE things are set forth in this passage -- Love, Faith, and Joy.

The first is a marked feature in those whom the apostle was addressing; the second is the root from which this feature is derived; and the third is the precious fruit with which it abounds. Let us look at these successively.

I. “Whom having not seen, ye love.” A little consideration will prove that there is the statement here of a very remarkable fact; and remarkable as it was then, it is still more so now. For observe, it is not a matter of opinion that is here spoken of. It is not what believers think about Christ. It is an emotion: it is what they feel in their hearts towards him. Well, those to whom the apostle wrote had never seen him, and yet they loved him; and more than eighteen centuries have run their course, and God’s people

this day love him also, though they too have never seen him. How is this strange fact to be accounted for? How comes it that my heart at this moment glows with love towards one who lived and died more than eighteen hundred years ago? It cannot arise merely from what is recorded of his whole character and life. There is doubtless every thing there to attract the deepest attention. The history of the Man of Sorrows cannot fail to call forth the liveliest interest, if it does no more; and more it assuredly does to the earnest and thoughtful mind -- it fills him with admiration and reverence. He looks on as Christ puts forth his power, and he says, "This is the finger of God." He follows him as he multiplies these wonders with lavish power, and he knows that "he went about doing good." He listens to him in his doctrine, and he confesses "never man spake like this man."

And yet all this, and much more, does not touch the mystery of that love which burns in the heart of a child of God towards the person of Christ, "whom having not seen, we love." It is not difficult to illustrate this. Let us turn our attention to any other historical character. Let us dwell on the record of such men as Abraham, or Moses, or David, or Daniel, or John. Let us fill our minds with all that is noble and good and true in them. Let us dwell on such features of character in them, as the most winning and attractive to us now in the living men and women of our

own day, and then let us make the effort to step beyond the boundary of mere admiration into the adjoining region of heart-felt love, and we shall soon discover that “with man this is impossible.”

Nay, more, let us suppose the case of one who has inherited a large property, which many generations before had been accumulated by the skill and industry of one, who at the same time, in all the varied relationships of life, was “honest, lovely, pure and of good report.” And yet, after all, what can there be personally in common between the two, between him who made the fortune and him who succeeded to it? The latter does indeed enjoy the fruits of his ancestor’s labour, and he may greatly revere his memory as that of a good and righteous man; but to speak of love in such a case is an abuse of language. The one and the other have never been brought into such close personal relationship as that the labour of the one and the enjoyment of the other should be illumined and enriched with the unutterable brightness of mutual love.

And yet here stands the fact regarding Christ and his people now; though they have never seen him, they love him. The heart of the believer is not only conscious of love, but often glows in love toward Christ. It so fills him, that all other earthly affections become subordinate to it. It takes such possession of all in him, that he will leave father and mother and wife and children for Christ’s sake. The

nearest and the tenderest ties fail to bind him with the potency of this one. Nothing can separate him from this love. Trials of every kind, and all his life long, cannot do it. The dungeon even, the rack, the axe, the stake, become as it were transfigured before him, because they lead into the presence of “him, whom having not seen, he loves.”

And let it be noted, that this is not an experience realized by a few enthusiasts. This is not an experience of a merely imaginative mind, of one who by a sort of dreamy romance fancies himself by contemplation into the idea that he loves. Very far from it. The consciousness of love to Christ is as universal as the acceptance of his gospel. No matter what the natural temperament or disposition may be; when Christ changes the heart, the heart turns to him. No matter how widely different in condition, in country or class; as soon as the grace which bringeth salvation begins to work in his soul, so surely, even as the needle points to the pole, does the new heart turn to Christ, with the opening at least of that emotion -- “Lord, thou knowest that I love thee.”

Riches cannot smother this love. Poverty cannot starve it. A rich Barnabas who sold all his possessions for his Master’s sake, did not love him more than the beloved disciple who had nothing but his fishing-tackle to give up. The man who by grace now consecrates his wealth to God, is conscious of the same constraining love in what he does,

as the poor woman, who, after her scanty meal of dry bread and pure water, was ready at the door to give of her poverty to a helpless stranger.

This love finds its way into minds of the highest as well as the lowest stamp. The aged statesman, as he passes from the stage of his earthly triumphs finds it to be unutterably precious, and the very imbecile can taste a joy in it, which makes light to spring up even in his darkness. The experience of this love does not depend on any outward advantages, regarding the cultivation of those talents with which man is endowed. He who perhaps, of all modern philosophers, has left the deepest foot-prints on the sands of time, the great Newton, was not so overburdened with his science, and his constant devotion to it whether in the heavens above or on the earth beneath, but that he could turn with the heart's love of a child to one who first loved him; while on the other hand, he who looked forth on the wonders of creation with a shepherd's eye, as he watched over his flocks on Salisbury plain, loved his Master no less than his gifted brother, who was opening up some of the mighty secrets of the universe.

Nor does this experience of love belong to any age in the life of a man. It is not merely when the heart is young and tender and impressible, that this emotion finds entrance and diffuses its sweetness. It brings forth its precious fruit in old age. "The Young Cottager" and "the Dairyman's

Daughter” drank of this stream by the way, and in their youth were gladdened and refreshed; and the aged minister who has so sweetly recorded their experience, found his own heart filled with the same unutterable sweetness in the evening of his days. Young Henry Martin and McCheyne leave all, and sacrifice all, for love to Christ; while in the extreme debility of old age, and at the point of death, the only being that, amid the wreck of all else, still holds his place in loving remembrance in the saintly Beveridge, is Christ, “whom having not seen, he loved.”

Nor yet, again, does this love find a place in only one kind of temperament among men. The man of diligent, active, business habits equally with the quiet contemplative mind which delights in retirement and the shade, are alike open to its blessed and constraining influence. There is no darkness of despondency which it cannot illumine, and no throbbing of happy life which it cannot chasten, elevate, and sanctify. The grave drink here, and look up with the sunlight of peace and joy. The merry hearted discover here, what all else fails in giving, “a joy with which the stranger intermeddleth not:” and all this too, and much more than this, not occurring in one nation or another people, but in all peoples, and nations, and languages, and tongues under the whole heaven. This is a love which wins its gentle way into the heart, amid the snows of greenland or under the burning sun of Africa. Sons and daughters of this great family --

whose one bond, amid other endless differences and varieties, is this love -- come from the east and the west, the north and the south, even from the ends of the earth.

Nor, once more, has the lapse of time changed the current or the character of this love. Through eighteen centuries one heart has caught the glow after another, and millions now in glory see Him face to face, whom, whilst on earth, though not seen, they had learned to love. And in all that countless throng, being gathered continually from the tumult below to the rest above, there is one thing which is as supreme as it is universal -- one thing which alike distinguishes them all, whatever be their place in glory, whether it be as the sun, or the moon, or the stars -- they are each and every one "made perfect in love."

And how is it possible to account for all this, but by the frank admission that the very love of Christianity is supernatural. No ordinary causes could produce such results as these. Nay, no ordinary cause could produce one such result among these millions. The being who draws forth such love must be something more than man. He must be one within reach of every one of those whose hearts are to be touched with love towards him. He must in truth be, what Christ declares of himself, "I am he that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore:" "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." Here indeed is the link formed which binds Christ and his people

together in the blessed emotion of mutual love. His child looks back with deepest emotion to the time, when on earth, his best friend suffered and bled and died for sinners. He sees Him gathering around Him, in the days of his flesh, all the deepest and tenderest sympathies of men. He sees Him weep and he hears Him sigh, and amid it all, he marks Him as He lifted up his eyes to heaven and prayed for his own, and then he finds that He looked out over the vast multitude which through successive ages should be gathered to him, and while He bore those before Him on his heart he shed the sweetness of his loving heart far beyond: "I pray not for thee alone, but for all who shall believe on me through their word." And thus, while in the mysterious person of the God-man Christ he gathered around him those emotions which swell in our hearts and influence our lives, he bound these in indissoluble union with the unchanging mightiness of his Godhead; and to the end of time presents himself to each one of his people, and by a peculiar operation on their hearts, equally divine with that which encompassed him with human sympathy, he whispers to the poor stricken heart, 'I loved you, before you loved me; I thought of you, when you neglected me; you were on my heart when I prayed that prayer; your sins were on me when I was in that agony in the Garden; it was your sins I meant to cleanse away when my blood streamed upon the cross: give me now thine heart!' And thus, in a manner altogether



superhuman and divine, one after another solves the mystery in his own most blessed experience -- “whom having not seen, ye love.”

Of all internal evidences his is the strongest, the sweetest, and the best. As regards “those who are without,” the child of God can rest happily in the conscious possession of that which nothing can shake. His Master may be lightly esteemed and despised; but his heart whispers, “I know whom I have believed.” Rude assaults may be made against the truth; earth and hell may combine in furious rage against the Lord and his people, but the child of God retires happily into the inner chamber with his Beloved and says, “Thou knowest that I love Thee;” and as he comes forth from such communion as this, he can calmly meet the ignorance and unbelief of his enemies -- “I have meat to eat that ye know not of.”

II. But turn very briefly to consider the root from which all this springs -- “Yet believing.” This is the link of gold which binds the Saviour and the saved one in the bonds of heavenly, holy, spiritual love. It is this which in the child of God takes the place of seeing with the bodily eye. From the first he does not “know Christ after the flesh.” His Master has come first to him within the very innermost circle of his heart’s deepest affections, where the fountain of love wells up in the heart. There, far away from human gaze, and not distracted by external things, the espousal has

taken place which has made him one with Christ and Christ with him for evermore. Neither the traditions of men nor the rudiments of the world have had anything to do with this. By the bright and pure light of a gift imparted to him, he has seen the Lord, and the plant of tender holy love has struck its roots deep down in the clear and blessed apprehension by faith of the friend who is nearer and deeper than a brother. And thus he experiences the power and graciousness of his Lord's words to Thomas -- "Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed."

III. Finally, think of the precious fruit which hangs in rich clusters on such love as this, so rooted by faith in that which is unseen: "In him, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." Love, both deep and strong, may sometimes be accompanied by a consciousness of the unworthiness of its object and so its tenderest emotions will be ever passing into stings of agony. Or love may take full possession of the heart, and yet from a consciousness of its being altogether unrequited, it must abide in the darkness of its own solitude, and consume itself by the inward fires which it must at all hazards conceal. But this love has one for its object who is "altogether lovely," one who is without the shadow of a shade upon his glorious character, and whose infinite worthiness it is impossible to express; and then this love is returned, or rather let it be said, his gentle love has called

forth the experience, “We love him, because he first loved us,” and so pure and heavenly happiness ever mingles with it, and joy irradiates it, as when the morning is spread upon the mountains.

It is the comprehending the love of Christ in some measure -- the knowing it experimentally -- which fills the heart with “all the fulness of God,” and causes it to overflow with joy. The believer is strong in this love. He can ask without presumption, “Who shall separate me” from it? He can deliberately and unshrinkingly reply, “I am persuaded” that nothing ever can. He has become so absorbed in it that he can say, “To me to live is Christ,” and in such a life he counts it “all joy when he falls into divers trials.” He does not count them strange, but he “rejoices in that he is made a partaker of Christ’s sufferings.” This is a joy which no bereavement can take away, for does not the heart, even in its deepest sorrow, still turn to its one friend, and say, “Christ is all?” And even when all is spared to it below, and the cords of earthly love are yet unbroken, this still is paramount, “Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.”

But the joy which springs from deep love never even attempts to express itself in words. It will beam forth from the eye; it will mellow the voice with its clear echo; it will give blessed animation to the lips, even as the breeze in the summer evening stirs all it touches; but it is too deep for

common utterance. And so of the great love of the soul to Christ, it is, as the apostle says, “unspeakable.” The soul has full possession of this “joy and gladness” -- “in the Lord;” but the utterance yet is impossible.

But if it is unspeakable, it is also “full of glory.” It waits for, desires and pants for, the glory which is coming when the “Beloved” shall appear. “In him, though now we see him not.” The love which fills the child of God goes forth towards the day when he “shall see him as he is,” when the loved one shall be met face to face. Then shall the day break, and all shadows flee away. And the servant shall not only “*enter* into the glory of his Lord,” but having arisen after that Master’s image, he “shall be satisfied with it” in the everlasting fruition of that which his Beloved has ordained: “Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory.”

One or two words ere closing: -- See why it is that we continue of the earth, earthy. It is the lack of this one grand and all penetrating principle. We need not wonder that where this love to Christ is not, all worldly and carnal things shall be in the ascendant. In the absence of the good and the true, the poor needy souls which cast about on every side for something which, if it does not satisfy, will at least relieve in some miserable manner the tedium and the weariness of its path, and in the absence of the great light of a Saviour’s love, compass the darkened heart with sparks of

vanity. But oh! the children of the world know not what they are neglecting. Would they but try this! It is not the experience of others that will guide them here. It must be their own. Oh! that they would go near to Christ. He is waiting for them. This being, so great, so true, so wise, so loving, -- shall he still have to say, "Ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life?"

One word to us who profess to be children of God. Abide in this love. The experience of it, even by the way, fills the heart of every child of God. If such be the sweetness of the stream, what will the fountain be? When we are admitted to his presence, we will find ourselves near one whose love lies deeper down than that of father, or mother, or brother, or sister, or wife, or husband, or child -- a love which has never wavered, and never been away from us during the whole of our earthly pilgrimage; a love which has associated itself with every moment of our spiritual being; a love which has borne our sorrows. With us, and mingled with our joys; a love which has been ever as watchful as it is tender, as ardent as it is lasting; a love which has cared for us in sickness and health; a love without autumn and winter; a love which only clings closer as heart and flesh fail, and which is ready to welcome us for ever into the place it has prepared for us in the mansions of the Father's house. -- D.K.T. DRUMMOND, B.A.

---

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

OF A GREAT WONDER WROUGHT BY A SERPENT OF BRASS.

WHAT I am now about to tell you of, happened very near to the time when the wanderings of the people of Israel were coming to an end. They had come to the borders of the country of Edom and their straight road to Canaan, by the east side of the Jordan, lay through that country. The place where they were encamped was called Kadesh. They had been there once before, a great many years back. It was from that place that Moses sent forth the twelve men, one from each tribe, to spy out the land. When the spies returned, ten of them frightened the people with the account they gave of the country and the giants that lived in it; and though the other two said in faith that the land was good, and that God was able to give it to them, the ten were believed, and the host would not go forward. Then God was angry for their want of trust in him, and he said that all the grown men would be left to die in the desert. So he made them wander about in the wilderness for forty years. These were now, however, drawing to a close, and the people were brought back to Kadesh again. This time God did not bid them go straight into Canaan by the south, but

meant to lead them in from the east, across the Jordan. So Moses

sent word to the king of Edom, asking him to allow Israel to go through his land, promising to hurt nothing, and to buy and pay for all the things they might need. Now the people of Edom were the descendants of Esau, the brother of Jacob from whom the Israelites were sprung, and one might have thought that their king would have said, Certainly; pass through my land by all means; especially as the message of Moses was a very kind and polite one. But the king said, No, you must not pass through my country, and brought out his army to fight against them and hinder them. So God told his people to go round another way. But this way took them back again into the desert, and led them a long way about. They were very much discouraged by the long hot journeys they had to take, and they began to complain and murmur once more against Moses and against God. No doubt it was a hard trial to them to be turned back after they were so near the land of promise, and to be made to travel through the sandy wilderness again, which would look very dry and bare after they had seen the green plains of Edom; but they should have thought of all the kindness of God to them, and have borne their toils for a little longer waiting to see how God would lead them. But this they did not do; and God was very angry with them for their hard complaining words after all he had done for them. So he

sent fiery flying serpents to bite them. I suppose the serpents leaping from place to place, seemed to fly, without actually having wings. But be that as it may, their bite was very deadly, and a great many persons were poisoned and died. Then the people began to think, and to feel that they had been unthankful and impatient; and they sent to Moses and confessed to him that they had sinned, and asked him to pray to God to take the fiery serpents away. Well, Moses went and prayed to God about it, and then happened the wonderful thing of which I was to tell you.

God said to Moses, Make a thing of brass, of the shape of the fiery flying serpents that have stung the people, and set it up on a high pole, and tell the people when anyone is bitten, and feels that he is poisoned and must die, just to look to the brazen serpent, and he shall live. Moses did not stop to say, What good would it do to look at a piece of shining brass, when one had got deadly venom in his veins; he went at once and did what God had bidden him. He knew that God could do what he pleased by any means he liked to use. He had sometimes wondered before how God could do what he said he would, and had been answered by God's saying to him, Is any thing too hard for the Lord? This time he did not object nor wonder at all, but had a brazen serpent made, and raised it high up on a standard pole, so that from all points of the camp it could be seen plainly. The yellow brass glittered in the sunshine, and



could be looked at a long way off. Then Moses sent heralds all through the camp to cry aloud, that if any person should be bitten by a fiery flying serpent, he might be healed at once by turning his eyes to the serpent of brass. I suppose when the people heard that, it would sound very strange to them, and some would scarce believe it. Perhaps some might be mad enough to say, What good can looking do? and to die rather than look. But probably it was otherwise; for people do not like to die, and will try any means to live; and the children of Israel had seen God work so many wonders that when they were brought to think, they could hardly doubt that he was able to do this wonderful thing as well. So they began to look when they were bitten, and when they looked they were healed at once. Soon nobody was afraid of the serpents and by and by they left the camp altogether. I dare say you have seen pictures of this strange cure, and perhaps you may recollect seeing the figures of poor dying men and women with their eyes turned towards the pole holding on high the serpent-shape of brass, and among them fathers and mothers lifting up little children that had been bitten so that they might look, and be healed. It is something like what the poet who has made such beautiful lines about the rainbow, says was done, in these lines: --

“And when thy heavenly radiance smiled  
O’er mountains yet untrod;

The mother held her child  
To bless the bow of God.”

Perhaps, in the case at least of very young children, if any such were bitten by the serpents, it was not needful that they should themselves see the brazen cure. Perhaps the look of faith by father or mother brought health to the babe. In all cases, however, you should notice that it required to be a look of faith -- of trust in God's power and in his promise. If a bitten Israelite, without knowing of what Moses had done by command of God, or paying no regard to the proclamation about looking, had just chanced to cast a glance at the brazen serpent, I do not suppose that the brass would have acted like a charm. If anyone had looked, saying, all the while, that he was sure it would do him no good, he would have died of the bite all the same. But when others were getting life by a look, it is not likely that any would neglect to look, or look without hope. What joy there must have been in the camp when the cures were found to be so easily wrought! Surely there would be also thankful worship of God. There would, too, no doubt, be much talking to one another about what had happened, much talking by the wounded who had been healed as to how they had felt, when like to die, and then made to live so wonderfully.

Many hundreds of years after this occurred in the wilderness, Jesus, conversing with Nicodemus, referred to what Moses did by the command, and made use of it to preach the gospel very sweetly. He said, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." He meant by this that he was to be lifted up on the cross, and to his throne on high, and then in the preaching of his name as the Saviour; and that just as the dying Israelites were saved from death by looking, so by trusting in Jesus perishing men would be saved from hell and sin. The proclamation of the gospel may be said to be, Look and live. We have almost these very words in a text of Isaiah, which is one of those which all young people should have by heart. Will you learn it now will you try to act on it? It is this: -- "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else."

-----

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. In what chapter of Isaiah is the text just quoted to be found?

2. Where are the words of our Lord, cited a little before, to be met with?
3. Find another text where Jesus speaks about his being lifted up, and predicts a grand effect?
4. Where do we read of one who received healing of a very sore disease, by simply touching an object?
5. What was it that Moses himself thought at first God would not be able to do?
6. What were the names of the two spies that did not join the rest in giving a bad report of the land?
7. Find places where they are mentioned as both alive after the people of Israel had gone into Canaan?
8. What great word of commendation is repeatedly spoken about one of them?
9. Where is the other of them called Jesus?

ANSWERS to the foregoing questions will be found by consulting the following chapters: --Isa. xlv.; John iii.; John xii.; Mark v.; Num. xi.; Num. xiv.; Josh. xiv.; Acts vii., and Heb. iv.

-----  
*Prayer.*

O LORD God of salvation, we thank Thee that Thou hast sent Jesus to heal our souls. We rejoice that when He was on earth He cured a great many diseases. We are sure He is quite as able to cure the sickness of the soul, as He showed Himself to cure that of the body. We come to Him for healing for sin, for we need it. We pray Him, to make our hearts clean and whole. We know of none that can save us but Himself. We look to him, and try to trust His grace. "Lord, touch us and we shall be healed; O bless us, and we shall be blest." To Father, Son, and Spirit be glory for ever. *Amen.*

-----

## EVENING WORSHIP.

O LORD, who hast taught us that all our doings, without love, are nothing worth, send Thy Holy Spirit, and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of love, the very bond of peace and of all virtues, without which whosoever liveth is counted dead before Thee. Grant this for Thine only Son Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

HYMN, or *Psalm clviii.* 1, 2-10, 11.

HOW heavy is the night  
That hangs upon our eyes,  
Till Christ, with his reviving light,  
To cheer our souls arise!

Our guilty spirits dread  
To meet the wrath of Heaven;  
But in his righteousness array'd,  
We see our sins forgiven.

Unholy and impure  
Are all our thoughts and ways;  
'Tis his th' infected heart to cure  
With sanctifying grace.

The powers of hell agree  
To hold our souls in vain;  
He sets the sons of bondage free  
And breaks their cursed chain.

Lord, we adore thy ways  
To bring us near to God,  
Thy sov'reign power, thy healing grace,  
And thine atoning blood.

## PSALM LXXII.

GIVE the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son. 2. He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment. 3. The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness. 4. He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor. 5. They shall hear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations. 6. He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass; as showers that water the earth. 7. In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. 8. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. 9. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust. 10. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. 11. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him. 12 For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him

that hath no helper. 13. He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy. 14. He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight. 15 And he shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba: prayer also shall be made for him continually; and daily shall he be praised. 16. There shall be an handful of corn upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth. 17. His name shall endure for ever; his name shall be continued as long as the sun; and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed. 18. Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. 19. And blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen, and Amen. 20. The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.

#### REVELATION XI. 14-17.

THE second woe is past; and behold, the third woe cometh quickly. 15. And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. 16. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon



their faces, and worshipped God, 17. Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.

### 1 THESSALONIANS V. 15-24.

SEE that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men. 16. Rejoice evermore. 17. Pray without ceasing. 18. In every thing give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. 19. Quench not the Spirit. 20. Despise not prophesyings. 21. Prove all things: hold fast that which is good. 22. Abstain from all appearance of evil. 23. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.

### 1 PETER III. 8-12.

FINALLY, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another; love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous; 9. Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise

blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called that ye should inherit a blessing. 10. For he that will love life, and see good days let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: 11. Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it. 12. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous,, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.

-----

*Prayer.*

WE thank Thee, heavenly Father, for the mercies of another sabbath day, for the privileges of private prayer and meditation on Thy holy word, and for the public ordinances of Thy day and house. We entreat Thee to forgive the sin which mars all our duties and mingles in all our services. Thou hast witnessed much in us this day which may well cover us with shame -- carelessness, wandering thoughts, worldly-mindedness, spiritual sloth; all these, and whatever else Thou has seen amiss, forgive, for the sake of Him who is our advocate with the Father and the propitiation for our sins.

And we earnestly pray Thee to seal us now by Thine own Holy Spirit. Take away what belongs to us. Give us what pertains to Thee. Bring home to our consciences, help us to retain in our hearts, all the truth which Thou has presented before us this day, and fill us with joy unspeakable in the possession of that which is more to be desired than gold, and sweeter than honey and the honeycomb; and may our profiting appear unto all men. Send us forth anew to the ordinary duties of life, with a fresh baptism of thy Spirit, and with ever increasing tokens that we have been with Jesus. May we be more Christ-like. Grant us to drink into his spirit, to lean upon His arm, to walk in His blessed steps, and to be conformed to His image. May He who is the light of life shine in our hearts and shine forth in our lives. And give us more grace, that we may contend earnestly and successfully against all our spiritual enemies. Clothe us anew with the whole armour of God, that we may fight the good fight, as seeing Him who is invisible. Give us calm and holy trustfulness in Thee when thou makest our mountain to stand strong; and if it be Thy will that troubles and trials await us, may our feet be shod as with iron and brass, and as our day, so may our strength be. Guide us all our journey through, from grace to grace, from sabbath to sabbath, until we enter on the rest that remains -- enjoy the sabbath which never ends, and join in the congregation of Thy saints for evermore.

And we desire at the close of this day to bear in mind before Thee all our brethren of mankind. Have pity on the nations. Alas! how many are yet in darkness. O send out Thy light and Thy truth. Pour out Thy Spirit on all flesh, and send forth labourers into Thy harvest, and may light spring up in all lands. Dispel the grosser darkness of antichristian superstition and error. Sound loudly Thy warning to Thy people in the spiritual Babylon, and speedily bring them out, lest they be partakers of her plagues. Deliver those who are in bondage under the delusions of the false prophet. Take away the dreadful curse which still rests on Thine ancient people. May they in these latter days look unto Him whom they have pierced, and mourn, and be yet again grafted into their own olive-tree. May the kingdoms of the earth to which in Thy providence many outward blessings have been vouchsafed, learn the true wisdom of serving the Lord, and seek first that righteousness which alone exalteth a people. Mercifully look on our native land. Manifold have been and are our provocations against Thee, and wonderful have been thy long suffering and patience towards us -- our kings, our rulers, our whole nations. O cast us not away from Thy presence! Leave us not to our idols. Give us not over to the sins which defile and degrade us. In the midst of wrath remember mercy. Spare us good Lord. Turn our hearts back again to Thee. May our churches be purified from all

evil leaven. May the great social iniquities which abound be removed. Purify us unto Thyself, as a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Give Thy blessing to all true-hearted labourers among us, whether their efforts are directed to those at home or abroad. Direct and sanctify all zeal for education, that while the needful culture of the mind is cared for, the precious things of the soul may be paramount. Crown with success all efforts to secure the honourable peace of our country. Let all exertions to improve the condition of the people at large, as regards both bodily and spiritual necessities be largely owned by Thee. When Thou dost afflict with any of Thy sore judgments, give deep humiliation and true repentance; and when Thou dost withdraw Thy heavy hand, give grateful and loving hearts to Thee, who doest all things well, and according to Thy will, in heaven and in earth.

And now, Lord, we commend ourselves and all our loved ones to Thee. Thou Shepherd of Israel, who never slumberest, watch over them and us. Keep us all under the shadow of the Almighty and in the secret place of the Most High; and give to us more gracious foretastes every sabbath-day on earth of that day when we shall serve Thee in thy temple, without weariness and without sin, for evermore. Even so, come, Lord Jesus, come quickly; come and take the kingdom to thyself, and reign for evermore. Amen.

---

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

*Morning.*

**Be filled with the Spirit:**

Speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;

Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church; and he is the saviour of the body.

Therefore, as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.

Eph v. 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24.

*Evening.*

**Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.**

But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.

For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.

For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace;

Prov. iv. 24.          Matt. xv. 18, 19.          Rom. viii. 5, 6.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;**

That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word;

That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy, and without blemish.

So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies: he that loveth his wife loveth himself.

For no man ever yet hated his own flesh but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church.

Be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

Eph. v. 25, 26, 27, 28, 29.

2 Pet. iii. 14.

*Evening.*

**Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain  
that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman  
waketh but in vain.**

It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat  
the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep.

Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit  
of the womb is his reward.

As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are  
children of the youth.

Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they  
shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies  
in the gate.

Ps. cxxvii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

**WEDNESDAY.**

*Morning.*

**Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers:  
for what fellowship hath righteousness with  
unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with  
darkness?**



And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you.

2 Cor. vi. 14, 15, 16, 17.

*Evening.*

**Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!**

It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down to the skirts of his garments;

As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.

Can two walk together, except they be agreed?

Let brotherly love continue.

Blessed are the peace-makers: for they shall be called the children of God.

If we love one another, God dwelleth in us.

Ps. cxxxiii. 1, 2, 3.      Amos iii. 3.      Heb. xiii. 1.  
Matt. v. 9.      1 John iv. 12.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.**

Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.

Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord.

Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.

Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God:

And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men.

Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal,

Forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.

Col. iii. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23.      Col. iv. 1.      Eph. vi. 9.

*Evening.*

**But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none;**

And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not;

And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away.

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,

Teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

1 Cor. vii. 29, 30, 31. Titus ii. 11, 12, 13.

## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; but fools despise wisdom and instruction.**

My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.

Walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path.

So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block, or an occasion to fall, in his brother's way.

Prov. i. 7, 10, 15.      Rom. xiv. 12, 13.

*Evening.*

**Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens.**

Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until that he have mercy upon us.

I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope.

My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning; I say, more than they that watch for the morning.

Ps. cxxiii. 1, 2.      Ps. cxxx. 5, 6.

**SATURDAY.**

*Morning.*

**Judge not, that ye be not judged.**

For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged:  
and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you  
again.

And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy  
brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine  
own eye?

Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out  
the mote out of thine eye? and, behold, a beam is in thine  
own eye?

Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine  
own  
eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote of  
thy brother's eye.

Matt. vii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

*Evening.*

**But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,  
long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,**

Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh,  
with the affections and lusts.

If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

Let us not be desirous of vain-glory, provoking one  
another, envying one another.

And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be  
on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

Gal. v. 22, 23, 24, 25, 26. Gal. vi. 16.

# HOME PREACHER, OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

SIXTEENTH WEEK.

## MORNING WORSHIP.

GOD of infinite mercy, who didst send Thy well-beloved Son to seek and save the lost, grant unto us by Thy grace to partake of the common salvation, that we, believing and abiding in Christ, may never again fall into those sins or vain conversation from which He hath redeemed us, but may ever grow in grace and persevere unto the end, to the glory of Thy holy name. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* cxxxviii. 3-8.

IN all my troubles, sharp and strong,  
My soul to Jesus flies;  
My anchor-hold is firm in Him  
When welling billows rise.

His comforts bear my spirits up,  
I trust a faithful God;

The sure foundations of my hope  
Is in my Saviour's blood.

Loud hallelujahs sing, my soul,  
To thy Redeemer's name!  
In joy and sorrow, life and death,  
His love is still the same.

### DEUTERONOMY VII. 1-11.

WHEN the Lord thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou; 2. And when the Lord thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them: 3. Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. 4. For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly. 5. But thus

shall ye deal with them; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire, &c.

-----

*Prayer.*

MOST holy and merciful God, we have now assembled before Thine altar in this house to worship and glorify Thy name. Pour out on this family Thy gracious Spirit that our oblations of praise and thanksgiving may be acceptable to Thee, and truly blissful to us. We are verily unworthy of this honour and privilege, for we have all sinned against Thee, and have forfeited every claim upon Thy favour. Notwithstanding, we draw near in the full assurance of faith, that Thou wilt not hide Thy face, but rather wilt cause its smile to shine upon and encourage our fellowship. O forgive us our sins: in the precious blood of Jesus we would be washed; and for His sake, we would earnestly beseech Thee to cast all our sins behind Thy back and into the depths of the sea. Numerous and aggravated are our transgressions, but we are not on this account to despair: for with Thee is forgiveness. O blessed be our God that he keepeth not His anger for ever, and that he delighteth in



mercy. Our hope is in Thy mercy, not in our merit. Merit we have none, and in mercy Thou are inconceivably rich. Bless the Lord, O our souls. We thank Thee, O God, that so far as our works are concerned, sacrifice and offering Thou wouldst not. We bring no lamb from our fold, no fruits from our harvest, and no blood from our own veins, wherewith to propitiate Thy lovingkindness. But we present to Thee a sacrifice which Thou hast already accepted, even the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world. Above Thine own bleeding sacrifice, we plead for mercy and grace to keep us in our times of need. We especially ask Thee the spirit of devotion on this the morning of Thy holy sabbath. We thank Thee for the appointment of a sabbath; and we pray that we may all be in the Spirit on the Lord's day. We praise Thee, O God, for the wonderful fact in the history of our redemption which this morning commemorates, even the resurrection of our Saviour from the grave. We would be glad because we do not see His body there. Blessed be our God that the grave in which he lay is empty. We would now be full of hope that our bodies also shall be raised, and thereafter be conformed to His glorious body.

Divine Redeemer! show Thyself to us this day as Thou didst to Thy disciples, causing their hearts to burn within them. May our faith in Jesus be confirmed by our

consciousness that we have risen already with Him, and have placed our affections where he sits at the right hand of God. God forbid that we should be subjects of the second resurrection before we have undergone the first. O raise us from our death in trespasses and sins, and quicken us together with Christ.

We thank thee, O Father, for the institution of public worship. Help us to wait upon Thee this day in the courts of Thy house. Let not the comforts of our own house indispose us for the services of Thine. Prepare us for meeting with Thee, and come Thou to us laden with the blessings of the gospel. If any of our number have not yet believed, let this be the day of their new birth. May the word preached tell powerfully upon their conscience and convince them of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. Holy Spirit! may Thy sharp two-edged sword pierce to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and be a discerner of the thoughts and intents of their hearts. Ere the sun go down, may they be safe in Him who is the hiding-place.

And as we prize the gospel for ourselves, so would we beseech Thee to send the glad tidings of salvation to all the ends of the earth. Increase the missionary spirit in the churches of Christ in our own and other lands. Let prayers be made continually for the coming of Thy kingdom, and may the liberality of Thy people aye more and more

increase. Convince every one that names the name of Christ that it is alike duty and privilege to contribute of their substance to the maintenance and diffusion of the glorious gospel of the ever blessed God. Hasten the time when we shall see Satan falling to the ground as lightning, when we shall hear of the idols being cast to the moles and the bats, and when the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. Come, Lord Jesus; O come quickly: for Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

HOLY FATHER! breathe upon us and give us peace. We are Thy children, and pray for more filial love and reverence. O may it be our meat and drink to do Thy will, and may our life ever glorify Thee. Holy Saviour! we are the guilty children of Thy Father; wash us in Thy blood, and make us clean every whit. Put upon us the best robe, and while we wear it, may we walk consistently with the condition and character of Thy disciples. Holy Ghost! shed abroad in our hearts the love of God, and testify with our

spirits that we are His chosen ones: and to Father, Son and Holy Ghost, we shall ascribe all the glory. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* xix. 11-14.

A charge to keep I have ,  
A God to glorify;  
A never-dying soul to save,  
And fit it for the sky;

To serve the present age;  
My calling to fulfil:  
O may it all my powers engage  
To do my Master's will.

Arm me with jealous care,  
As in thy sight to live;  
And let me now myself prepare  
A strict account to give.

Help me to watch and pray,  
And on thyself rely:  
Assured if I my trust betray,  
I shall for ever die.

## ACTS IX. 1-12.

AND Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, 2. And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. 3. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus; and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: 4. And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? 5. And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest. It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks, &c.

## GALATIANS VI. 1-10.

BRETHREN, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, let thou also be tempted. 2. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. 3. For if a man thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he

deceiveth himself. 4. But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. 5. For every man shall bear his own burden, &c.

-----

## SERMON XVI.

“ONLY BELIEVE.” -- Mark v. 36.

JAIRUS’ daughter was dead. No created power now could reanimate her. The great Physician undertook to do it, but on one simple condition, that the ruler should “only believe” that he could and would. The condition was complied with, and the little damsel “arose and walked.” And thus it happens with man and the Saviour.

Man died when he sinned. Neither he, nor Eve, nor angels, nor animals, nor herbs, nor flowers, nor suns, nor stars might know it, but it was true notwithstanding. And it was not long before every one said it. The oracle said it, “In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die;” and the Holy One, having looked upon the face of the spiritual corpse, departed from Eden. The angels said it, and discontinued their friendly intercourse. The subtle serpent himself said it, contradicting his own assertion -- “Thou shalt not surely die.” The phenomena of nature said it, as

thunders pealed and tempest roared. Death said it, as he flung his grim veil over the scene and headed the procession of "all our woe." The whole creation said it, in the deep groans that told the present and foreknelt the future destiny of the fallen. And are not all mundane disorders still re-echoing the appalling truth, that "man is dead?" It must never be forgotten; the mourners must ever go about -- must never doff their "inky cloaks;" the chronometers of time must never cease ticking and speeding the black-edged telegrams, which tell to every succeeding generation the sad, sad story. A thousand voices keep repeating it -- the moral lethargies and desolations, the cruelties, idolatries, and obscenities of heathen lands, the profanities, infidelities, and licentiousness of refined Europe, are all saying it. There is not a mute among them. "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night teacheth knowledge," concerning it, even the death of the human soul in trespasses and sins.

The great question is, Can this soul be restored to life? It cannot surely be, What shall we eat or drink? The chief end of man is to glorify God, and he can never serve that end by merely feeding and dressing corpse, by wrapping around it the cerements of the grave, and by herding with the beasts of the field, and all this as if there were no hope of living again, no means of salvation, no immortality of joy and holiness. Here cometh in the gospel with its glad

tidings, proclaiming from Calvary and its cross, that man may be restored -- that together with Christ's dead body, he may arise -- rise in this world, rise to newness of life, rise to the old purposes of his being, to godliness, usefulness, heaven.

But how can this be? How can such a dead soul be raised up? The answer is at hand. The great Physician is near, and his prescription is at once simple, easy to be understood, and certainly effective. "Only believe" that Jesus himself died for sin and rose again, then cometh back to life, and life "more abundantly." It is admitted that the restorative in such a case must be perfectly adapted to the peculiar condition of the sinner -- must be brought to him, because he cannot go to it; must be applied to him, for he is without strength to do so. Well, it is all so arranged. Jesus comes and says to every dead sinner, as he said to Jairus, "Only believe." Now there must be something very comprehensive, very potential, very divine, in this gracious prescription. Here surely must repose the fiat of the Almighty One. Let us search and inquire whether these things be so. In order then to live anew unto God we have only to believe, and --

I. *That is all.* By this we mean, that in order to be saved, we have only to take God's word for it that Christ has done all that was necessary to make it just and right in him to pardon us, and to make it perfectly safe for us to



trust our souls in his keeping. When we say “that is all,” we refer exclusively to the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ as the whole and sole ground upon which we can ask, and God can give, a full and free salvation. We have only to believe, whatever our substitute may have to do. We have only to believe that his life did satisfy the law, and that his death did satisfy the justice of God in our room and stead. Is mere believing then literally all we have to do? Yes, in one sense -- No, in another. We are certainly to be holy, and to do good works; but our being made holy, and our doing good works, do not form the grounds of our justification. We are only saved on account of Christ’s good work of atonement, that is all -- the all and in all of a sinner’s pardon; and the good works of which men speak invariably come after, but never precede, our believing reception of Christ. Man’s new or better life is merely the stream that accompanies and flows from his pardoned state. To maintain the reverse, that his good works precede or purchase his pardon, is to subvert the entire plan of remedial grace, and to throw his justification before God, not upon Christ, but upon himself; or to assert that God has no justice to be satisfied, and that Christ, therefore, had no atonement to make, verily did make no atonement, but only manifested to mankind a beautiful example of the self-sacrifice of love, is to subvert the whole Bible account of the way of salvation, and to make a profane travesty of

the great mystery of godliness. Instead of reading “the just shall live by faith,” it would be “the just shall live by works or by personal righteousness,” which, in every view of the matter, is simply absurd. Thanks be unto God that in order to be saved -- in order to live again, and to live for ever -- we have only to believe in Jesus, in what he is, in what he did, in what he suffered, and in what at God’s right hand he is now doing on our behalf: that is all. We are to look clean away from ourselves, and from every one and everything else, and solely and fixedly to “behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world,” and our sins among the rest -- that is all: for “he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”

Again, in order to live anew unto God, we have only to believe --

II. *That is enough.* Whereas in the former proposition the reference is exclusively to Christ’s “finished” work as the sole ground upon which pardon is offered to the guilty, in this one the reference is to the fancied good works of men as not only not sufficient for their salvation, but as really neither required nor offered. The former included Christ’s righteousness, and it alone; this excludes man’s righteousness, and it entirely, from all share of part in the one grand atonement. It is not easy to say which is most difficult; the persuading of the sinner that it is all in Christ;

or that none of it is in the sinner himself. We are prone to self-conceit; it breeds in and permeates all the “joints and marrow” of the old corrupt nature. It is soothing to think that we have some small share of credit in whatever we may be benefited. We are strongly inclined to improve upon God’s plan, and to add to his work some trifle of our own. But if we could do this, it would not be true to say of “believing” that it is enough. We see, of course, that it is an inconceivably grand thing to be saved; that it is a much greater thing to be saved than it is to be created or preserved; hence we fall into the error of thinking that we may lay upon God’s altar some tender lamb of our own, to bleed and die there, alongside of his chosen spotless one. But is it very presumptuous in us so to think and act, because not one of us is righteous -- not one of us can make ourselves righteous; and, even though we could, it would not mend the matter, for what we now did would only be doing present duty; and doing present duty cannot make amends for the omissions of the past. The payment of present and pressing debts cannot, and do not, liquidate past debts. And is it not a great blessing that it is so? viz., that what our surety did for us is enough, and that our faith in what he did is enough, for our salvation. Into what a dilemma should we have been cast if it had been otherwise! Just suppose that something had been left for us to do; that we had an appendix of self-righteousness to make up; a

supplement of atonement to eke to Christ's sacrifice --  
where should we have been? what could we have done?  
We have nothing to give, and though we have got plenty to  
do, we can do nothing well: and surely we could never think  
of trusting the life of our souls to what is neither holy, nor  
harmless, nor undefiled? Assuredly we of all creatures have  
abundant reason for thankfulness that, in order to our  
eternal welfare, faith in Jesus is quite enough -- enough for  
the "magnifying of God's law and making it honourable" --  
enough for the peace of the human conscience -- enough for  
the alpha and omega of spiritual life -- the beginning and  
the perfecting of godliness in the soul. O the immense  
importance of our Mediator's "finished work!" Of all that  
ever dwelt upon the earth, he alone, when dying, could  
appeal to God, and declare -- "I have finished the work  
which thou gavest me to do." All our works, even at their  
most advanced stage, are unfinished; and therefore it is our  
only safety, as it is our sum of duty, to trust in the  
righteousness and blood of him who loved us with an  
everlasting love, and "died for our sins according to the  
Scriptures."

"Forbid it, Lord! that I should boast,  
Save in the death of Christ, my God:  
All the vain things that charm me most  
I sacrifice them to his blood."

Again, in order to live anew unto God, we have only to believe --

III. *That is necessary.* Faith in Christ is a divine institute. God has appointed it to be an essential accompaniment of our salvation. "He that believeth shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned," are appalling words, but tremendously true. No man was ever saved without believing -- "without faith it is impossible to please God." So high is the place assigned to faith, and so firmly bound up is it with the word of God concerning our salvation, that we are almost justified in saying that, in order to our being personally benefited by Christ's death, that death is not enough without it. It may indeed be thought that such an averment makes faith, not Christ, the all and in all of our salvation, and that our former proposition is therefore subverted. But a moment's reflection will set us right here. All faith has an object. If you ask me to believe your word, you must give me your word in order to my believing it; but in this, it is not my faith in your word that does me good, but your promise as given for that end. So it is here. The object of Christian faith is Christ, and Christ only; but the word passed for our salvation is the covenant-promise of God, that "whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." Hence, though there be no salvation for us unless we do so

believe, yet in that very moment when we do believe, it is he himself that performs the saving act: not our faith in him, but he on whom it rests, justifies and saves our souls. Herein then lieth the necessity of faith: it is the order of Christ's own arrangement, it is inseparable from the mystery and ignorance and helplessness of our present state, and it vindicated by the supreme and exclusive adaptation of Christ himself to our distressing wants as the fallen and the condemned.

Now this annexation of faith has been complained of as an ungracious thing, as a clumsy and cumbersome affair. It has been asked somewhat profanely, when God was at the work at any rate should he not have made it so perfect a thing as to be entirely independent of even the appearance of conditions, as to be available to the sinner without this interposition of belief? In reply we may ask, Who is ever so unreasonable as to argue that, when God was making a mind for man, he might have given him such a completeness of knowledge as to supersede the necessity of hard study -- he might have ruled it so that the pupil should at once, and as if instinctively, have leaped from the alphabet to the heights of science? Why did not the Creator produce at once the man, and the scholar, and the philosopher? Or thus -- why did not God make every man at his birth as wealthy as Croesus, and dispense with the necessity of toil and labour from early youth to dewy age? No sensible person says it is

unreasonable to read and study to acquire learning, or to work diligently in order to amass wealth and power. Why then should it be thought a useless exercise of our faculty of believing, when God demands it that we may be saved? If the hand of the diligent only maketh rich, why should not the work of faith accumulate for us the unsearchable riches of Christ? which suggests the next particular, that in order to live anew unto God, we have only to believe --

IV. *That is reasonable.* There is nothing so fully consistent with what is called reason as true and undefiled religion. It is *sin*, not piety, that is unreasonable. Let us examine unto this matter. We have seen that in expiating human guilt, Christ has done it all -- all the law of God required -- all that the dread necessities of the case demanded. If then all the work of atonement be his, and all the advantages that flow from it be ours, reason says, let us own it. The monopoly by Christ of this entire work dictates the justice and propriety of ascribing to him the merit thereof. Nothing can be so highly unreasonable as to decline to give honour to whom honour is due. But we see the reasonableness of believing still more clearly when we consider the simple, artless, unencumbered nature of belief. It is not such a great way off, after all, from our natural capacities; it is not in itself intellectually impossible; it is not an unpleasant exercise, and it is in itself very profitable in as much as it secures for sinners all they stand in need of.

It were unreasonable to be constantly employing, as an agent, what could never command the desired end; but when that end can be certainly gained by a clearly defined and withal a simple process, it is the very height of reason to use it.

This reasonableness of faith can be further argued by considering its congeniality with those substantive truths which are presented to its reception. Faith and reason are mutual help-meets, and no power can put them asunder. It is truth, the truth of God as it is in Christ, that is offered to man. Reason was given to him for the very purpose that he might receive that truth. By that truth, then, he is made to live anew, only, however, when the receptive faculty is put in exercise towards it. And what is that receptive faculty? What can it be but faith -- only believing. Yes, faith and reason are suited to each other: beautifully and nicely are the two balanced and made to fit into each other so that they point in one direction, wherever it is God that speaks, and man that is spoken to. The eye is well adapted for seeing, and the ear for hearing, but not more so than faith is to reason.

Altogether, it is just so very right in itself that man should believe in God, or in the truth which God proclaims, that we cannot conceive anything so utterly opposed to reason as to refuse to believe. It should never be forgotten that faith has led to damnation, as well as to salvation.



Adam believed the serpent, and was lost. The devil told a lie, and it was credited. How much more reasonable then is it to have faith in God and in his truth, than in Satan and his lie. In a word, Jesus Christ, the object of our faith, is altogether so worthy of our confidence, that to refuse it is, in every conceivable sense, the most mindless as well as heartless conduct. Is not his wisdom infallible? his word sure? his love unparalleled? his power irresistible? his grace all-sufficient? his eye unslumbering? and his arm clothed with salvation? Why then do we hesitate about committing our souls to him -- to him whose adaptation to all our spiritual wants is so full and perfect? Surely this is folly, if it be not insanity of the deepest type. Wherefore let us only believe. To do so is pure wisdom, and "wisdom is the principal thing. She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she give unto thee."

Again, in order to live anew unto God, we have only to believe --

V. *That is easy.* That there may be no mistake here, we may at once explain that by "easy" here, we mean precisely what Christ himself means when he says, "My yoke is easy." The subject of human inability is not before us, the necessity of the Spirit's influence is not yet before us, and we hold of course both these scriptural doctrines; at the same time we also hold that Christ's yoke or religion is

“easy,” in the sense in which he used that adjective. Faith is his “yoke” or “burden,” and the one is “easy,” and the other is “light.” Difficult enough, in certain connections, we hold it to be, but easy also in that one in which alone we are now looking at it -- the exercise, namely, of a faculty we have from God, that therewith we may do his work and obey his word.

As this is accounted a somewhat difficult subject it may be useful to examine it a little more closely: --

1. We would remark, first, *that belief is easy in itself*. You never find it difficult to trust the word of an honest man: why then find a difficulty in the way of believing God’s word? He is truth itself. His word has gone out of his mouth and he cannot lie, neither can that word be recalled: it must through eternity remain binding upon him. We dare not, however, assert that we never do find it difficult in any sense of degree, for we often do -- all men often do. But this is not because there is anything specially incredible or forbidding in his word; every thing about it is charming, convincing, fascinating. It is in the sinner’s own mind that any difficulty lies. He chooses not to believe in God, because he does not like him and is averse to his way. Every holy mind finds it easy, delightfully easy, to trust in God with all its might. With what sublime ease do “angels that excel in strength do his commandments, hearkening to the voice of his word!” With what perfect ease do the

spirits of just men made perfect minister to his pleasure! And with what comparative ease do his people, even in this world, “run in the way of his commandments!” True, Satan, the world, and the flesh conspire to make religion difficult and disagreeable. Satan especially favours in us the idea that God is “a hard taskmaster;” and *that*, just because he knows that if men were only persuaded to try them, they would instantly find that “wisdom’s ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.”

2. *Belief is easy compared with unbelief.* Unbelief is not easy; it is the very reverse. From those who have heard the gospel for a long time, it takes hard work to keep it in its place. They do not find it so easy to resist light, to quiet conscience, and defy God. This is work which gives them many a twinge, many an agony; this causes them often more thought, more vexing cares, more forecastings of the dreaded future, more inward toil and trouble, than all the ills of life together. Faith in a holy and kind God was once natural to the mind, and whatever is natural is pleasant. Unbelief is a demon, and all mere disquietudes of the sinner are nothing else, depraved as nature now is, than her maddened efforts to exorcise him. In the battle of unbelief no one ever came off a conqueror, for conscience will not, to the end of life, bear false witness to her Lord. Victory, on the other hand, crowns every conflict of faith with light unclouded and with life everlasting.

3. *Belief is easy compared with work.* Had *work* been proposed, and not faith, we might have preferred it. Had God said, "I will pardon your sins --your souls shall be saved; only, as a condition, you must go and perambulate the earth, climb its mountains, and navigate its seas; you must go and tunnel the globe, cut and tear your flesh, slay your first-born, and offer as a sacrifice the pleasant fruits of all your harvests:" some might have thought these things practicable, and because the order to do them pays a compliment to human pride, they might have attempted them. But simply because our Father annexes to the salvation of our deathless souls kindly faith in his own Son, it is complained of as neither reasonable nor easy; and yet easier all would find such faith to be than to do these or any other works such as God could accept. The doleful tenants of monasteries and nunneries can testify to this; the wearied and mortified builders of a Babel righteousness can testify to this; the last struggles and malisons of a dying hour all testify to this -- that no hope ever rises over the tumbling ruins of a house that has been reared on the sands of time, and that no song is ever sung as the chafed and startled spirit passes out of it into the presence of the Judge of all.

4. *Belief is easy compared with what Christ himself had to do.* He had all the obeying, travailing, suffering, dying; we only have to put our trust in him and in his work. We resemble the spectators of a princely work of

architecture: its plans and its construction belong to other hands; the pleasure, the profit of seeing it and using it belong to us. Few can write a great poem, but all may read and enjoy one. The genius, patriotism, and unselfishness of a great statesman may prove the salvation of the commonwealth; but the citizens thereof simply partake of this quiet prosperity. How comes it then that we cannot see Christ's work and our faith in it in such a light? What shall we say? What is it that prevents us from arising and casting off all unbelief, and putting on all faith? Let this be our determined purpose -- to habituate ourselves to realize Christ as a real, actual, living person. It is just possible that we have been all along dwelling too much upon the abstractions or doctrines of our religion, and too little on its persons -- on God as our holy and loving Father, on Jesus as our able and willing Saviour, and on the Holy Ghost as our sanctifier and comforter. Now, we should reverse this. We should labour to become quite familiar with these divine friends; and specially should it be our constant aim to reproduce Christ constantly and endearingly to our minds as a real and precious Saviour, and far more valuable to us than the dearest earthly friend we have. It is impossible we can err in our conceptions here; it is all so true, and he is all so lovely. We will find it far easier to realize him than to apprehend a doctrine -- that it is more natural to draw to a living loving heart than to a truth, however beautiful in

system or sentiment -- that it is more satisfactory to have intercourse with what can speak to us, smile upon us, bless us, than merely to sympathize with a grand idea, or be able to unravel all mysteries. Applied to Christ, how true is all this! There never was so real, so ardent, a friend as he was, never such an eloquent advocate on our behalf; and there never can be such another Saviour. O, if beauty of expression, if perfect symmetry of form, if distinctness of purpose, if brilliancy of action, if ocean-like fulness of love, if speech of surpassing melody, if awful holiness of soul and life, if untiring activity, if transparent unselfishness, if, we know not how many magnificent traits and munificent displays of mercy -- if these and many other such glorious characteristics do not make it alike simple and easy to call up at any moment of calm reflection the lovely person and matchless work and worth of Christ, we know not how it can be possible for any man to recall the features or actions of any friend, we know not how memory can ever be able to do her proper service in the claims of gratitude, nor how love can ever shed her affections over the hearts that pant for them. Thus reflecting, it seems to us that if we cannot easily bring up Jesus Christ to our mind's eye, accompany him in his pleasing or painful walk, and assure ourselves of our actual personal interest in him and in them, that the sentiment of friendship among men is a dream, that the office of gratitude is a sinecure, and that the confidences

and concords of loving hearts are all fictions or shams. Were we speaking in the hearing of a wife whose husband, or of a mother whose boy is now upon the deep deep sea; we might appeal to such if they ever find it difficult, as they sit alone in the secret chamber or lie awake in the midnight hour, while wailing winds are blowing or winter storms are raging, to reproduce at once before them the very image of the loved one, and to feel as if they were in his very presence, and could clasp him in the fond embrace. Why then, O why, should it be deemed a difficult or impossible thing thus to think of, thus to value, thus to realize the only, the one only being in God's great universe, who pitied us in our lost estate, and died once for all that we might live for ever!

And now, in the last place, in order to live anew unto God we have only to believe, and --

VI. *That is final.* The end of a matter is often said to be gained while as yet the initiatory step has only been taken. And again, a thing is said to be as good as done when a fair start has been made. Even so is it with faith and the salvation which it secures. In that moment in which we believe, we have everlasting life. Jesus told Nicodemus that "whosoever believeth *hath*," not may have or shall have, but *hath*, "everlasting life" -- hath it even now in the germ, or in the title that infefts us into it. It is so with the heir: he may be a minor, but he hath the estate, legally and

really too; only, he must attain his majority before he can independently enjoy it. When then we say that believing is final, we simply mean that our eternal life is thereby secured. The grand object may be said then to be accomplished. We seize our pardon, we are certified of purity and perfection, and we are entitled to our place and our throne in heaven. In the interval between faith and sight we may have many trials, difficulties, and dangers; but our right to the inheritance of saints is absolutely and for ever established. It is recognized by our heavenly Father now, and will be publicly admitted in that day when he maketh up his jewels. The certainty of all this is so fixed in the purpose and goodness of God as to justify us in designating that faith as the finale to all kinds of peril. It is just so final that for us no more atonements on Christ's part, and no more conversions or effectual callings on ours, shall be required. Not another good work of any kind whatever shall be demanded of our surety, and no repetition of our first and final act of faith shall be possible. By that one act of faith in that one atonement we have possessed our souls of life and immortality; not that we shall not continue to believe and to do good works to the end of our life, but that all such things are mere sequences of the great first cause of all -- even faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. When one full fountain serves to fill the channel, and when that fountain is ever flowing, it is not needed to open other



fountains; the one will suffice. When one good meal satisfies hunger, there is no need for another immediately to follow it. When one application of the remedy effects the cure, its repetition is uncalled for; and so, when we only believe, all is done -- it is final. Progress there may, there must be, but the ultimatum is secured -- even eternal life; and this is the only ultimatum of which as much can be said. As much cannot be affirmed of any human plan or prospect; after doing our best, our all, we may fail. There is an infant: we may strive to train him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and all may promise well for the future, but he may turn out worthless. There is a book: we may read it, and think over it and understand it, and yet we may be as good or bad at the end as at the beginning. There is a business: we may work at it diligently, rise up early and sit late, and it may all go to wreck. There is the recruit: he may go to drill and tramp ever so orderly on the parade, but when he comes to the battle-field he may turn his back to the foe. But here is an ultimatum, here is a security, here is a final thing, here is faith in Christ, of which, when we see it in a man, we may safely declare that he is in heaven, or that heaven is in him, which is much the same. He may have years of hard fighting, he may be in many a breach, he may even sometimes be seen to stumble and fall ; but he invariably rises again, and wins the victory at the last. And yet, how strange it is, that although this is

the only one thing in the future of which we are absolutely certain, and though all other things are notoriously uncertain, yet to the latter we strangely and doggedly turn, and leave the certain over till some more convenient time. “O that we were wise, that we understood this, and would consider our latter end!”

Since faith then is such a mighty, comprehensive, and final thing, let us not rest till we have it. Like all other good and perfect gifts, it cometh from God -- it is eminently his gift, and he makes us as welcome to it as to his Son, whom it receives and in whom it reposes. Let us ask it from him, seek for it, knock loud and often, till he hears and opens and bestows. Let us not think that it is beyond our reach -- that it is too high, and that we cannot attain to it. Let us only drop all unbelief, and admit the simple truth of Jesus and his atoning sacrifice, and as the Lord liveth we shall, we must be saved. But without faith we can no more be saved than we can be saved without Christ himself. We may accumulate during life riches, and learning, and fame, and power, but in the day of our death we will find all these to be useless -- absolutely useless. If, however, at that solemn hour we are found only believing, we will die not only peacefully, but safely. Nothing else can avail. It is remarkable that even the finest scholars, when they come to die, shut their books, come down from their uppermost seats of learning, and simply refresh their souls by drawing water

with the pitcher of their faith out of Christ, the only well of salvation. They refuse every other confidence, they will embrace no other truth than the faithful saying that "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, even the chief." "You are dying," said one to Dr. Whately, the late archbishop of Dublin, "you are dying as you lived, great to the last." "I am dying," he replied, as I lived, in the faith of Jesus." "What a blessing," said one, "that your glorious intellect is unimpaired." "Do not call intellect glorious," said the prelate, "there is nothing glorious out of Christ." "The great fortitude of your character," it was said, "now supports you." "No," replied the archbishop, "no; it is not my fortitude that supports me, but my faith in Christ." When the accomplished philosopher, Sir James Mackintosh, was near his end, his son whispered to him, "Your trust, father, is in God." "In Jesus," was the reply; and so he passed away. Even so let us all surrender our souls to him who died for us on the accursed tree; and when we too are made to confront death, judgement, and eternity, we shall find in our blissful experience that this is "the victory which overcometh the world, even our faith." Amen.

-- J. M'Farlane, LL.D.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

### OF A WONDER WROUGHT BY A MANTLE.

YOU have heard people say that every rule has its exceptions; that is, there are some cases where the rule does not hold. Well, I suppose it must be so. It is the case, at least, in regard to an old old rule, to which, judging by what we see, we should say there is no exception at all. Indeed, the wisest of men has said in other words that there is no exception: for the exceptions were so very few and peculiar that they did not need to be taken account of. Indeed, when Solomon said what I refer to, there had just been one. Perhaps you are by this time wondering what I can be speaking about. It is this: -- the old rule was laid down by God when he said to fallen Adam, Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. Do I need to say that this rule applies to all? Yet there have been exceptions; very few indeed, but some. There have been two -- one in the world before the flood, and one since. You could tell me at once the names of the two men who went away from earth without dying. Will there ever be any more? There will; for at Christ's coming those who are alive will not die, but

be changed. And those who love Christ, and are looking for him, will go away from this world very much as the holy man went of whom I wish to tell you. For they will be caught up along with the raised dead to meet the Lord in the air.

The first exception to the stern rule of death, was that of Enoch. He lived before the flood. But the Bible does not tell us how he went away from the earth. It simply says that he was not, for God took him. The great poet Milton, makes a pretty picture of fancy about it. He presents Enoch as rising in the midst of a council called for consideration of affairs, and speaking much about justice, and truth, and peace, and judgment from above, when young and old would have seized him and slain him --

“Had not a cloud descending snatched him thence,  
Unseen amid the throng.”

Afterwards he makes the angel Michael say to Adam to whom a vision of his had been shown: --

“Him the Most High,  
Rapt in a balmy cloud with winged steeds,  
Did, as thou saw’st, receive, to walk with God  
High in salvation, and the climes of bliss.”

But the Bible itself tells us how the good man, whose case makes the second exception to the rule of death, was borne away from earth, and I am now to put in other words the beautiful story.

The name of this good man, as you know, was Elijah. He was a prophet of the Lord, living in Israel at a time when the ten tribes were ruled by a weak king, whom his wicked wife made to do as she pleased. He did many wonderful things, by the help of his God. At last his work on earth was done. But it pleased God not to take him to heaven by the usual road of death. He carried him straight up into the sky. This strange thing happened in the way I am now to tell you.

Elijah had a friend and disciple who was to follow him in his work of bearing the messages of God to the people. His name was Elisha. He was very fond of his master. Now one day when they were going together from a place where they had been, Elijah said to Elisha at a town to which they had come, Stop here, for I must go further. But Elisha, who knew that God was calling his master away altogether, would not stay behind. Several times Elijah wished him to remain, but he would not. At length they came together to the bank of the river Jordan. Standing to look at them there were fifty young prophets, to whom God had said that Elijah was to be taken away that day. Now the river Jordan was at the place where there stood a deep

broad stream, through which no one could wade. What did Elijah do, when he wanted to go to the other side? He took off his mantle, and wrapped it together, twisting it round, I suppose, and then he struck a blow with it on the waters, and they were divided so as to leave a passage on dry ground. How strange it must have been to see a furrow stretch from bank to bank -- to see the water on one side, cut off as by a great knife, flow away down, while that on the other hand stood like a wall. Then how curious it must have been for those fifty young men to see Elijah and Elisha walk across the bed of the river, and to observe how, as soon as they were over on the further bank, the river rushed on as before. Why did Elijah take his mantle to smite the waters? Just as Moses took his rod. The rod was the staff of office in Moses' hands, and the sign of the power of God. Now the mantle was the robe of office in the prophet's case, and a stroke from the mantle was just like a voice from Elijah bidding the river part asunder in God's great name. Miracles, you see, of all kinds, and wrought in whatever way, come always to this; the power of God does all.

After Elijah and Elisha had crossed Jordan they went on talking together, and Elijah said, Before I be taken away, what shall I do for you, Elisha? What do you think Elisha asked? Not wealth, not long life, but a double portion of his master's spirit. He wished to be a prophet like Elijah, and to be, as it were, his eldest son, to whom a

double heritage was always given. Elijah, knowing that only God could do this, but taught in his mind by the Holy Ghost what to say, answered that it was a hard thing that Elisha had asked; but if he should see his master when he was taken away, it would be as he wished. So in a little time after that, as they walked over the plain, a chariot-like fire came between them; and Elijah was taken into the chariot, and in the midst of a great storm-wind rode away up to heaven. As he went up, Elisha saw him, and cried out, My father, my father, the chariot and the horsemen of Israel! While he was saying this, the mantle of Elijah floated down to the ground, and Elisha took it up very carefully. When the storm was past, and there was no more to be seen of his great master, he turned his steps back to Jordan. He came to the brink of the water, and taking the prophet's mantle he prayed to God, calling him the Lord God of Elijah, and smote the waters as his master had done. The same effect took place as before. Elisha walked across the bed of the Jordan, on dry ground, and the young men who were looking on cried out, "The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha." So indeed it did rest, for Elisha after that wrought many great wonders -- gentle, kind, beautiful works -- great, like Elijah's more in mercy than in judgment.

Once, after he went to heaven, Eliah visited the earth. He was sent down by God to meet with Jesus. The place where they met was the top of a mountain. Moses was also



there; and Jesus took three of his disciples up with him. While the three were together, their talk was about Christ's death. By this we know that what Moses wrote in the Bible, and what the prophets also wrote there, was to have its fulfilment in the cross of Jesus. The Old Testament lifted up its finger to point to the Lamb of God who was to take away the sin of the world. Paul tells us of three good things that abide -- faith, hope, love. I think they may be said to have met on that hill-top -- Moses represented faith; Elijah, as a great prophet, was like hope; Jesus was love.

-----

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Can you tell to what the New Testament says the going away of Enoch without death was owing?
2. Where are we told that the dead in Christ will rise before the living are changed?
3. On which side of the Jordan was Elijah born?
4. Where do you read of a prophet, other and earlier than Elijah, appearing with a mantle?
5. Who, besides Elijah and Elisha, went through Jordan on dry ground?

6. When did any one cross a sheet of water without dividing it, or sinking in it?
7. Who besides Elijah, went up into heaven while those who called him Master were looking on?
8. Elijah went in a whirlwind which carried him past death -- where do we read of a whirlwind which brought death?
9. What were the names of the three disciples who were with Jesus, when he met with Moses and Elias?
10. At what other times were these disciples with Jesus, in the absence of the rest?

ANSWERS to the foregoing questions will be found by consulting Heb. xi.; 1 Thess. iv.; 1 Kings xvii.; 1 Sam. xxvii.; Josh. iii.; Matt. xiv.; Acts i.; Job i.; Luke ix.; Mark v. and xiv.

-----

### QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE LESSONS.

1. How many heathen nations did God cast out of Canaan to make way for his chosen people? Deut. vii. 1.
2. Were the Israelites allowed to form any covenants or alliances with these devoted nations?
3. Why were they forbidden to form such alliances?

4. Are Christians at liberty to enter into such alliances with bad men as would involve approval of their evil deeds? Deut. vii. 4; 1 Cor. v. 11.

5. Could the sacrifices which were offered under the law of Moses of themselves take away sin?

6. Has the one offering of Jesus Christ made a perfect atonement for sin?

7. On the ground of Chris's perfect sacrifice is forgiveness of sin secure to all believers? Heb. x. 16, 17.

8. Believing in him, are we then warranted to come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need? Heb. x. 22; iv. 16.

-----

### *PRAYER.*

O GOD, who didst appoint unto men once to die on account of sin, we thank Thee that One has died who has taken away for all that trust in Him the sting of death. Grant to us grace that we may trust in Him, and find when death comes to us, that it does us no hurt. Grant that to us to live may be Christ, and to die gain. This we ask for Jesus' sake. *Amen.*

-----

## EVENING WORSHIP.

O THOU who knowest our frame, and rememberest that we are dust, who pitiest us as a father doth his children, have mercy on our manifold shortcomings and sinful infirmities, and so deliver us from all sins of the flesh and of the spirit, that we, being strong in Thee and in the power of Thy might, may in our weakness have Thy strength perfected, be enabled to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, and, finally, to be more than conquerors through Him that loved us. *Amen.*

### HYMN, or *Psalm* lvi. 9-13.

BLESS'D be the dear uniting love  
That will not let us part!  
Our bodies may far off remove,  
But we are join'd in heart.

Join'd in one spirit to our Head,  
We wait his will to know,  
That we in all his steps may tread,  
And do his work below.

O may we ever walk in Him,  
And nothing know beside;  
Nothing desire, nor aught esteem,  
But Jesus crucified!

### HEBREWS X. 1-22.

FOR the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices, which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect. 2. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. 3. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. 4. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats would take away sins. 5. Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: 6. In burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. 7. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will O God. 8. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt-offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not,

neither hadst pleasure therein; (which are offered by the law;) 9. Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. 10. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. 11. And every priest standeth daily ministering offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: 12. But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God; 13. From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. 14. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. 15. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us, for after that he had said before, 16. This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts and in their minds will I write them; 17. And their iniquities will I remember no more. 18. Now, where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. 19. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20. By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; 21. And having an high priest over the house of God; 22. Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

-----

*Prayer.*

AUTHOR of our being! under Thine own sanction we present ourselves before Thy awful throne: we have heard Thy commandment, and obey it; we know Thy will, and do it; we seek Thy face and favour, and find them both. Blessed be Thy name, O thou Most High, for that Thy name is near Thy wondrous works declare. O help Thy children to adore Thee; show us Thy glory; and as Thou passest by open our ears to Thy declaration that Thou art the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the impenitent; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and unto the fourth generations. Teach us, O Lord, to know Thee, and to know Thy Son Jesus Christ, for this is eternal life. We are not only naturally ignorant of Thee, but Thou art not in all our thoughts; yea, we are the enemies of the living God. Placing ourselves at the feet of Jesus, we would eagerly imbibe the spirit of His sublime faith; may the same mind that was in Him be in us also.

We thank and praise Thee for that holy book which contains Thy mind, which reveals Thy mercy in Christ toward us the sinful children of men. O may the entrance of that word give light to our darkened understanding, softness to our hard hearts, and comfort to our distressed souls. May we peruse its inspired pages with childlike simplicity and confidence, and take it all as Thy message to our poor, sinful, fallen world. Give us the habit of daily searching the scriptures, and may we lay up their doctrines and commandments in our minds that we may practise them in our lives. Bless to us also the preaching of Thy word by Thy ministering servants. Thou hast highly favoured us this day by allowing us to assemble ourselves together in Thy sanctuary. We have sung Thy praises, we have petitioned Thy throne, we have listened to Thy gracious word, and the offers of Thy mercy in Christ have been pressed upon our acceptance. Surely we are a blessed people, to have heard the joyful sound of redeeming love. Deeply impress upon us a sense of our responsibilities. We have received much; and from us Thou wilt demand much. O grant us grace to make suitable improvement of our religious means. Dispose us to fall in with the overtures of Thy love, and, casting all our sins and cares on Jesus, may we now run with alacrity and joy in the way of Thy statutes. Father, forgive what Thou hast seen amiss in our conduct when in Thy courts. We confess to many foolish



thoughts, to many wandering imaginations, and even to many shameful doubtings. Wash us after sanctuary duties, and enable us hereafter to watch carefully over our spirits when we call upon Thy name.

O God! sanctify to us our sabbath-day feast. May we feel ourselves to be more spiritually strong, and more than ever heavenly-minded, when we have been made partakers of the bread and of the waters of life. Above all, O Lord our God, cause our sabbath services to increase our faith in and love to Jesus. May we feel our comfort in His righteousness taking deeper root in our hearts, and our love to Himself and to His cause habitually becoming more and more ardent. O constrain us by this love to live, not to ourselves, but to Him who died for us and rose again. Help us to count all things but loss for His excellent knowledge, and make us willing to spend and be spent in His service. O make us holy as He is holy, and perfect as He is perfect.

We unite in commending to Thy mercy all Thy ministering servants at home and abroad who have this day been proclaiming the unsearchable riches of Christ. Let there be joy in heaven this evening, because of repenting sinners. O have mercy on the heathen who know Thee not, and whose sacrifices are offered to devils, and not to Thee. Thy kingdom come. Remove all the obstacles that are now in the way of the triumphs of the cross. Bring the delusions of Mahommed, the superstitions of the Hindoo, and the

unbelief of the Jews, to a speedy end. O give Thy Son the heathen for His inheritance, and the uttermost ends of the earth for His possession. Let our Saviour see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied.

We beseech Thee, O our God, for all who are in any trouble. Heal the sick, provide for the poor, comfort the afflicted, and save the dying. May all mundane sorrows and vicissitudes work together for their and our good. May we arise and depart from worldly-mindedness and all sin when Thou speakest, whether in Thy word or in Thy providence. O elevate our affections: we are prone to bury them in the earth; do Thou set them and keep them upon Thyself, and after we have, in Thy mercy, served Thee in our generation humbly and faithfully, may we receive the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls.

And, O our merciful God, let all our friends and relatives, wherever they may be, share in the blessings which we have now implored from Thy gracious hand. May we be all so bound together by the ties of grace, that, when the ties of nature are broken, we may be reunited in heaven to be parted no more. Upon the unconverted, if there are such, and especially upon the children and the rising generation, pour out Thine influences. O let none near and dear to our hearts perish. May they be all saved. May the lambs of the flock be carried in Thine own bosom, preserved for Thine own glory, and blessed now and for ever with

Thine own love and truth. O covenant-keeping God, remember that Thy promise is to us and to our seed. Receive then our little ones, and lay Thy hands upon them, and pray for them. May we never have cause to grieve through their faults; and when we are called to heaven may we all be found there at Thy right hand, not one of the family amissing.

And now we commend us to Thy keeping during the hours of unconscious existence. May the Shepherd of Israel, who slumbers not nor sleeps, watch over us and keep us from all evil; and when we awake in the morning, may we find ourselves still with God. Hear us, O Lord, and do, and defer not, for the sake of Him whom Thou always hearest. *Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

*Morning.*

**Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.**

Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering.

And above all these things, put on charity.

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

1 Cor. viii. 1      Col. iii. 12, 14.      1 Cor. xiii. 1,2.

*Evening.*

**Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,**

Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil.

Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

1 Cor. xiii. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:**

From which some having swerved, have turned aside unto vain jangling;

Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

1. Tim. i. 5, 6, 7.      1. Tim. iv. 12.

*Evening.*

**But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:**

That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience.

And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge;

And to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness;

And to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity.

Tit. ii. 1,2.      2 Pet. i. 5, 6, 7.

## WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.**

Evil shall slay the wicked; and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate.

Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you; because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.

He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now.

He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him:

But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.

Lev. xix. 17.      Ps. xxxiv. 21.      1. John. ii. 8, 9, 10, 11.

*Evening.*

**For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another.**

In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.

For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning that we should love one another.

Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.

Tit. iii. 3.      1. John. iii. 10, 11, 12.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again.**

If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldest forbear to help him; thou shalt surely help with him.

For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Fret not thyself because of evil doers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.

Have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.

Exod. xxiii. 4, 5.      Mat. vi. 14, 15.      Ps. xxxvii. 1.      1 Pet. iv. 8.

*Evening.*

**Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.**

Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil.

For evil doers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth.

For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.

But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

Ps. xxxvii. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long.**

For surely there is an end; and thine expectation shall not be cut off.

Be not thou envious against evil men, neither desire to be with them;

For their heart studieth destruction, and their lips talk of mischief.



For so is the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.

Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

Prov. xxiii. 17, 18.    Prov. xxiv. 1, 2.    1 Peter ii. 15.    2 Tim. ii. 22.

*Evening.*

**Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high.**

Righteousness art thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee; yet let me talk with thee of thy judgements: wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? Wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously?

Thou hast planted them; yea, they have taken root: they grow; yea, they bring forth fruit: thou art near in their mouth, and far from their reins.

For there are no bands in their death; but their strength is firm.

Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment.

Hab. ii. 9.    Jer. xii. 1, 2.    Ps. lxxiii. 4, 6.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.**

If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children.

When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me,  
Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end.

Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction.

How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment!  
They are utterly consumed with terrors.

Ps. lxxiii. 3, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19.

*Evening.*

**Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?**

Envy thou not the oppressor, and choose none of his ways.

For the froward is abomination to the Lord; but his secret is with the righteous.

The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked: but he blesseth the habitation of the just.

Surely he scorneth the scorers: but he giveth grace unto the lowly.

The wise shall inherit glory: but shame shall be the promotion of fools.

James iv. 5. Prov. iii. 31, 32, 33, 34, 35.

# Home Preacher, or Church in the House.

## Seventeenth Week

### Morning Worship

THOU, King Eternal, Immortal, and Invisible, the only wise God, make us wise unto salvation; and so lead us into the saving knowledge of thy revealed will, and into the love of all Thy holy precepts, and into the faithful and daily keeping of the same, that we may reach the full joy and peace of the gospel, and abide in them all our days, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, or *Psalm* xlv. 1-5.

MY God, my Father, cheering name!  
What joy to call thee mine!  
With humble faith and love to claim  
A portion so divine!

This comfort can my fears control,  
And bid my sorrows fly;  
What real harm can reach my soul  
Beneath my Father's eye?

Whate'er thy providence denies  
I calmly would resign,  
For thou art good, and just, and wise;  
O bend my will to thine!

Whate'er thy providence denies,  
Lord give me strength to bear;  
Still let me say, "My Father reigns,"  
And trust his tender care.

Thy ways, great God, are little known  
To my weak, erring sight;  
Yet shall my soul, believing, own  
That all thy ways are right.

## PSALM XC.

LORD, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations.  
2. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou  
hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting  
to everlasting, thou art God. 3. Thou turnest man to  
destruction; and sayest, Return ye children of men. 4. For a  
thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is  
past, and as a watch in the night. 5. Thou carriest them

away as with a flood; they are as a sleep: in the morning they are like grass which groweth up. 6. In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth. 7. For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled. 8. Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance. 9. For all our days are passed away in thy wrath; we spend our years as a tale that is told. 10. The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away. 11. Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath. 12. So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. 13. Return, O Lord, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants. 14. O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. 15. Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil. 16. Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children. 17. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.

## 1 CORINTHIANS XV. 1-25.

**MOREOVER**, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; 2. By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain: 3. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4. And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures; 5. And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve; 6. After that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. 7. After that he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. 8. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. 9. For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. 11. Therefore, whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed. 12. Now, if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13.

But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: 14. And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. 15. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God: because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ; whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. 16. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised; 17. And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. 18. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. 19. If in this life only, we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. 20. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept. 21. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. 22. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. 23. But every man is his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. 24. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. 25. For he must reign, til he hath put all enemies under his feet.

-----



### *Prayer.*

O GOD, we have been in Thy care through the watches of the night; under the shadow of Thy wings have we found rest and safety. We laid us down and slept; we have awaked, for Thou hast sustained us.

And now, amid the lights and mercies of a new day, what shall we say unto Thee, O Thou preserver of men! We shall reckon up our benefits as in Thy sight, until, as we have often done before, we find them more than can be numbered. Our life is full to overflowing of Thy lovingkindness, and the light of Thy mercy shines even on the commonest of our gifts. Thou givest us bread to eat and raiment to put on. Thou renewest our strength day after day. Thou givest us in fresh gift each morning the home in which we live, and the friends who make it dear and tender. What reason have we to thank Thee because Thou settest the solitary in families, preserving each of us, day after day, from the loneliness of the homeless and the bereaved! Any morning might dawn upon our sorrow and tears, might cast its light upon the face of our dead. We are all of us here alive before Thee, and we thank Thee for continued life. Sanctify to us this hallowed day; enrich all its means of grace with that blessing which alone can make them truly

helpful to us. May we be in the Spirit on the Lord's day. May we rise above all care and strife, and enter with Jesus into a sacred rest; sharing with Him in the joy and liberty of His risen life, sitting together with Him in the heavenly places.

Alas, how unlike unto Thee are we still! Sin is still dark and strong in us, and there is much in our life that can only be displeasing in Thy pure eyes. Enter not into judgment with Thy servants, O Lord; for in Thy sight we cannot be justified. Grant us the grace of repentance every day, that we may never think ourselves well without healing, or strong without help. May we mourn over the evil which is yet within us, and earnestly endeavour after the grace by which it may be expelled. Especially may we know the sin-subduing power of the atoning sacrifice. May the blood of sprinkling cleanse us day by day. May we live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us, and who gave Himself for us; and so rest on the one foundation He hath laid, and so conduct all our affairs in and for Him, that we may be able to declare before all that we glory not save in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world is crucified unto us, and we unto the world.

We shall soon go forth once more into its toils, and among its many cares. Gird us with strength; inspire us with a hopeful courage. Make us afraid, if danger should come near, lest we should pass on among the simple and be

punished. Make us willing to do our work, although it should be humble, or common, or difficult. Make all duty great by the light of Thy presence, and by the hope of the everlasting reward. Make us afraid of hiding a single talent, or of losing one hour. May we work while it is day; and watch and be sober; and hope unto the end for the grace that is to be brought unto us at the coming of Jesus Christ.

We pray that His kingdom may grow through all the earth. May it grow mightily even to-day. Strengthen Thou the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, "Be strong; fear not." Endow the strong with tenderness, that they may help the weak. Give patience to the ardent, that they may wait as well as work. Give sympathy to the cheerful; and cheerfulness to the suffering. Let all Thy people rejoice and be confident in thee.

Pour out Thy Spirit from on high on all the waste places of the earth, and let the deserts rejoice and blossom as the rose. May they blossom abundantly and rejoice even with joy and singing. How long; O Lord! how long? Thou hast promised to give unto Thy Son the heathen for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession. We remind Thee of the promise. We remind Thee of all who have lived and died in the faith of it. Many, in every age, have gone forth bearing precious seed, the harvest of which they never gathered. And still the sowers

are going forth to sow; and the angels, the reapers, are ready; and all the world is weary; and the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. Arise, O God, plead Thine own cause. Let Thy word, at length, prevail mightily over all opposition. Let every adversary of the truth be ashamed, so that the Great King may ride forth prosperously in the chariot of salvation, and be hailed by the acclamations of a regenerated world. When He cometh may we be of those who shall hear Him say, “well done, good and faithful servants.” We humbly ask these things for His name’s sake. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

FATHER of lights, shine upon our darkness, and grant us a gracious deliverance from ignorance, prejudice, and sin; and such effectual teaching of thy Holy Spirit that we may, now and ever, receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save our souls, and bring forth its blessed and abundant fruits with patience, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, or *Psalm* xxxi. 19, 20, 23, 24.

HAIL, everlasting Prince of peace;  
Hail, Governor divine;  
How gracious is thy sceptre's sway!  
What gentle laws are thine!

Thy tender heart with love o'erflow'd;  
Love spoke in every breath;  
Vig'rous it reign'd through all thy life,  
And triumph'd in thy death.

All these united charms how strong  
Our frozen souls to move!  
And this the proof of love to Thee,  
"That we each other love."

O be the sacred law fulfill'd  
In every act and thought;  
Each angry passion far removed,  
Each selfish view forgot!

Be all our hearts dilated wide  
By our Redeemer's grace;  
And in one grasp of fervent love,  
His foll'wers all embrace.

### JOSHUA XXIV.

AND Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and called for the elders of Israel, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers; and they presented themselves before God. 2. And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nahor: and they served other gods. 3. And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and I multiplied his seed, and gave him Isaac. 4. And I gave unto Isaac Jacob and Esau: and I gave unto Esau mount Seir to possess it; but Jacob and his children went down into Egypt. 5. I sent Moses also and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt, according to that which I did among them; and afterward I brought you out. 6. And I brought your fathers out of Egypt: and ye came unto the

sea; and the Egyptians pursued after your fathers with chariots and horsemen unto the Red Sea. 7. And when they cried unto the Lord, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians, and brought the sea upon them and covered them; and your eyes have seen what I have done in Egypt: and ye dwelt in the wilderness a long season. 8. And I brought you into the land of the Amorites, which dwelt on the other side Jordan; and they fought with you: and I gave them into your hand, that ye might possess their land; and I destroyed them from before you. 9. Then Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose and warred against Israel, and sent and called Balaam the son of Beor to curse you: 10. But I would not hearken unto Balaam; therefore he blessed you still: so I delivered you out of his hand. 11. And ye went over Jordan, and came unto Jericho: and the men of Jericho fought against you, the Amorites and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; and I delivered them into your hand. 12. And I sent the hornet before you, which drave them out from before you, even the two kings of the Amorites; but not with thy sword, nor with thy bow. 13. And I have given you a land for which ye did not labour, and cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them; of the vineyards and oliveyards which ye planted not do ye eat. 14. Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers

served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord. 15. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served, that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. 16. And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods; 17. For the Lord our God, he it is that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the people through whom we passed: 18. And the Lord drave out from before us all the people, even the Amorites which dwelt in the land: therefore will we also serve the Lord; for he is our God. 19. And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the Lord,; for he is an holy God; he is a jealous God' he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins. 20. If ye forsake the Lord, and serve strange gods, then he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good. 21. And the people said unto Joshua, Nay, but we will serve the Lord. 22. And Joshua said unto the people, Ye are witnesses against yourselves, that ye have chosen you the Lord, to serve him. And they said, We are witnesses. 23. Now therefore put away (said he) the strange gods which are among you, and incline your heart



to the Lord God of Israel. 24. And the people said unto Joshua, The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey. 25. So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem. 26. And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God, and took a great stone, and set it up there under an oak that was by the sanctuary of the Lord. 27. And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be a witness unto us: for it hath heard all the words of the Lord which he spake unto us: it shall be therefore a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God. 28. So Joshua let the people depart, every man unto his inheritance. 29. And it came to pass after these things, that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, being an hundred and ten years old. 30. And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-serah, which is in Mount Ephraim, on the north side of the hill of Gaash. 31. And Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the Lord, that he had done for Israel. 32. And the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem, for an hundred pieces of silver: and it became the inheritance of the children of Joseph. 33. And Eleazar the son of Aaron died; and they buried him in a hill that

pertained to Phinehas his son, which was given him in mount Ephraim.

-----

## SERMON XVII.

“WHO, WHEN HE CAME, AND HAD SEEN THE GRACE OF GOD, WAS GLAD, AND EXHORTED THEM ALL, THAT WITH PURPOSE OF HEART THEY WOULD CLEAVE UNTO THE LORD.” --Acts xi.

23.

“HE exhorted them all;” and they were not few. They were the new Christian converts in Antioch -- converts made, as it were, in a chance way, out of all ecclesiastical rule; but good and sound converts notwithstanding, as all their after history showed.

Antioch first received the gospel from travelling preachers, or rather from men who probably never had been preachers before, but who became so as soon as they were driven away from Jerusalem by the persecution. The *rule* among them at first, was to preach *only* to the Jews; which they did in Phenice, Cyprus, and Antioch. But some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, in a happy moment, thought of speaking also to the Grecians, and lo! The same

results followed -- they believed just as if they had been Jews. "The hand" or power of the Lord was with the preachers, "and a great number believed and turned unto the Lord." The tidings reached Jerusalem, and the church there, not knowing what to think -- afraid, cautious, not at all approving as yet, not at all sure about admitting the Gentiles in such numbers -- yet sent Barnabas, evidently in a kindly spirit. He was a Hellenist, or Greek Jew, a Cyprian also, and would therefore, probably enough, *know* some of the men from Cyprus who had preached the gospel in Antioch with such effect. He was sent to watch the work, to correct and restrain as it might be necessary. He came, and all doubt vanished from his mind as soon as he saw the real character and extent of the work going on! The impression at once produced on his mind was, "This is nothing else but the grace of God;" and being himself a good and gracious man, "he was glad, and exhorted them all that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord."

Now this exhortation is to us, just as it was of old to them to whom it was first given. There is no difference that is essential. Two thousand miles of land and sea lie between the two places -- *there* and *here*; but a religious truth is as true in any one part of the world as in any other. Eighteen hundred years come between the two times -- *then* and *now*; but "a thousand years are to the Lord as one day." In the annals of eternity it was but "yesterday" -- yesterday

in the morning of the day, that Barnabas preached at Antioch, exhorting them to “cleave to the Lord with purpose of heart.” So fresh and living is the religion of Christ! So perpetually the same are the needs of man! Let us consider and apply the exhortation: let us consider first, and then apply.

At the basis of it, or in the heart of it, there is this great truth -- that Christ, the Lord Himself, is the centre, sum, substance, of a sinner’s religion. Christ is Christianity. We are to cleave not to the system so much as to the person, who, in his revealed personality, shows, lives, makes the system; not so much to the truth as to the Lord. Of course we do accept the system of revealed truth; we cannot believe intelligently without doing that. But it is a higher and fuller and more entire act of the mind to accept of the Saviour, to cleave unto the Lord.

Now, what *is* this cleaving to Him?

I. It implies an act and state of *dependence*. We are not going to lay down any express order of human experience in coming to the knowledge of the truth; because there is no invariable order in the consciousness of the individual. The mind has many powers, and many affections, and any one of them may be used as a first door of entrance for the truth. The Lord can come into his own house when and how He chooses. The first thrill of his presence may be felt in this power or in that -- here, or there, in the soul’s

consciousness; in the fear, or in the faith, or in the love, or in the joy, or in the resolve, of the awakening soul. It does not matter *how*, if the soul *does* begin to cleave unto the Lord. But very often, although, as we have said, not invariably, the first consciousness of such a condition is just this simple feeling -- a feeling of dependence.

We must depend, and we must have this feeling of dependence soon or late -- we must have it soon *and* late. For this is not a feeling suitable to a crisis simply, a day of decision, or a time of trouble. It is a state to live in. It is a beautiful and blessed state to die in -- a state of dependence: *so* the soul cleaves unto the Lord.

This is a very simple state, we have said, and yet how much it expresses and implies! It says, it is the soul saying, I have no strength; give me a staff, or better still, an arm, to stay me and hold me up. I have no wisdom; give me a light to shine upon my way, and let me see the pointing of a hand where in future that way will be. I have no goodness -- none; let me have the goodness of another, a perfect spotless virtue, to be to me a garment of salvation. I have *nothing* of my own, I must look for all to Christ. I know not even the depth and fullness of my own need, I must trust to Him to search me and know me, and see if there are any wicked ways in me, and then lead me in his way everlasting.

Such is this feeling of dependence. It has all these things, and others like, within it, and yet how simple it is!

A child depends on the arm which carries it. A traveler depends on the wooden bridge, frail though it may look to the eye, by which he crosses the black abysmal gulf, to fall into which were swift destruction. A voyager depends on the ship he sails in, and on the captain who steers it safely through stormy seas. So, with the like simplicity, with the like quietness of trust, we depend on Christ alone for salvation. Do you know this? Hear it, learn it, you who labour and are heavy laden; you who are weary in the greatness of your own way; you who look for something in your feelings to justify your trust -- learn that trust is first, and feeling after; that you must depend on Jesus, without previous mental conditions: as you are, however that may be. If only you feel that by cleaving to *Him* your need is met and your heart is satisfied, then I exhort you to cleave unto the Lord in this feeling of helpless and absolute dependence. Your weakness will be strength, your helplessness will be all-sufficiency, you will say ere long, "When I am weak, then am I strong." "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me."

II. But in this cleaving to the Lord there is more than dependence. We might depend on one whom we did not, or even could not love. But in this case how different! To cleave *is* to love. And where the love is not, the cleaving will not be for long. Fear may bring us into contact with the Saviour, but only love has power to keep us in the

union. Sometimes sense of sin, and fear of danger, and conviction of need, so work in the soul as to drive it to this only refuge; and that soul for a while seems to sing the old song of eternal triumph. ‘Who shall separate me from the love of Christ?’ Yet, alas! in a while the separation is accomplished, and accomplished apparently without any great difficulty. No tribulation! No distress, persecution, nakedness, famine, peril, or sword! No killing all day long for his sake! No struggle with “death or life,” with “angels, principalities, or powers!” All is quiet, and yet the sad separation has taken place -- as when the snow melts from the hill, as when the leaf falls from the tree on the mild autumn day. Why is this? It is because there is *no love*. The apparent cleaving to the Lord was but the rush and the cling of fear, was but the grasp of self-interest. It was but the sign of the hatred of misery and pain, of sin in its consequences rather than it itself, while there was no love of the goodness of Christ, by which the sin is destroyed.

We cannot cleave to the Lord unless we love. We cannot be saved without love. Our love is our heart; we might almost say it is ourselves. The love, more than all else, is the man. It is more than trust, more than hope, more than joy, more than anything else we can think, or feel, or do, or give, or be. “God is Love;” and when we have love answering to his love in Christ to us, we are like Him -- we possess him -- we live in the very element of his

felicity. And without this there is no eternal bond. Without this we are giving a divided service, we are not offering a whole burnt-offering, we are not cleaving to the Lord. Like Ananias and Sapphira, we are keeping back a part -- a part? yes, almost the whole, if we do not love. Our love is ourselves. Christ does not want our cries, our fears, our words, our works, our so-called sacrifices, separated from ourselves. It is ourselves He wants. "I seek not yours, but you." He looks at all we can do, and be, and bring, and suffer, apart from our love, and it is nothing to Him -- makes Him no richer, no more a Saviour than He was. He still says, "My Son, give me thine heart. Lovest thou me?" But if He sees the love, then He is satisfied; the heart is then won, and that living soul is cleaving unto Him.

Perhaps the most expressive instance of the cleaving of inseparable love, in the Bible, is that of Ruth to Naomi. That of Jonathan to David is also beautiful -- very; but that of Ruth to Naomi is wonderful! The characters are simple enough. Two Hebrew women -- two Eastern women, at least. Three stand together when we see them first -- weeping, pleading, preparing to part. The eldest of the three is Naomi, the Hebrew mother. She has been dwelling in the land of Moab for at least ten years; she has buried her husband there, and her two sons -- all that she had. And now, a sorrowful, desolate woman, she is turning homewards to seek some solace in the land of her birth.



These two young women who have come thus far with her -- they are not of her blood, they are not of her race. They are daughters-in-law to her, but their home is in Moab; and (no doubt after many tender talkings) she gives, or tries to give, the farewell kiss. To one she gives, but not to both. "Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clave unto her." And then Naomi, knowing that she was poor, portionless, bereaved, without standing now in life, husband and sons all gone, said to Ruth, "Behold, thy sister-in-law is gone back to her people, return thou after thy sister-in-law." But Ruth said, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest I will die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me and more also, if ought but death part thee and me." A noble, unselfish utterance -- the most passionate, and yet the purest cleaving of love -- well deserving to be enshrined, as it has been, in the songs of all Christian lands, and to be cherished in the admiration of all Christian hearts; well-deserving of being made the symbol, as we do instinctively make it, of that still holier love by which our eternal consecration to God in Christ is sealed -- by which we "cleave unto the Lord."

III. the next element in this cleaving to the Lord is found in the will set to obedience -- in the determination or

*purpose* of the mind to continue in consecration to the end. The very expression, you see, is in the test, so that we cannot mistake. “He “exhorted them that, *with purpose of heart*, they would cleave.”

We have seen that the dependence that cleaves is not the dependence of fear, or selfish longing. It links itself with vehement and unselfish love. And the love is not a transient and vanishing flame. It burns as calmly as the stars. It is a fire on the altar that never goes out, for it is sustained by the strength and fed by the diligence of a “purpose of heart to cleave unto the Lord.” When Naomi saw that Ruth was *steadfastly minded*, she left speaking to her, and they two went on together. The same steadfast mind to go with Christ will do much to still the speakings and overcome the hostilities of all who are against it. A “steadfast mind!” A “purpose of heart!” These, when fully formed, are invincible things. You have seen a rocky island dashed by the waves of every storm that comes, until sometimes the whole air is resounding with the shocks, yet never moving from its place. You have seen a tree--giant oak or sylvan beech--assailed, shaken by the whirlwind, until men who had often found shelter beneath its leafy shade fled away from it in fear, to escape possible destruction in its fall; and yet it stood unhurt, and smiled once more under the sunshine of the summer day. You have seen the sun or moon climbing the heavens while the rack of the tempest

came driving and hurrying on, as if to quench the brightness. But mist and rain and dark storm-clouds passed, and left the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. You have seen -- no, you have never seen, and may you and I never see! but you have heard of -- serried ranks of living men standing the fierce shock of battle and turning the tide of war. But there is something grander and morally more noble than all these. Stronger than ocean rock, firmer than rooted oak, more unquenchable than sun or moon in wintry sky, more immovable and invincible than patriot soldiers of the freest land -- is the "steadfast mind," the "purpose" of the heart that cleaves unto the Lord.

"Endure *hardness* as good soldiers of Jesus Christ." Cleave unto him in this way -- in a way that will calmly set at defiance the frown, the sneer, the merry scoff. Cleave to Him with such *force* of purpose in your soul that, like a ship with a great way on, sailing through the outer circles of a whirlpool safely, although within sight and hearing of the maelstrom, you will be able to pass through all the enchantments that pleasure may try to throw over you; through her charmed grounds (if duty calls you) without feeling the spell; through even the tides and currents of passion that may lie in your voyage -- wafted by the trade-wind of eternity, and borne onwards by the tide that will never cease to flow until it touches the eternal shore.

Endure "*hardness*." I like that word so applied. "Hardness!" That is what many need. Some men are too soft and yielding in the life of Christ. The only tactics they uniformly favour in the holy war are those which teach them gracefully to retire. But that is not the teaching of Christ. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil -- not to retire with compliments to him. "Stand, therefore." "Having done all, to stand." "With purpose of heart cleaving unto the Lord."

Do you say that hardness is apt to become unloveliness, that tenderness and sympathy are apt to be lost or frozen up in the heart of it? No doubt that might be! What virtue can you cultivate, what course can you adopt, without danger to free and growing men? But there is no need that Christian hardness should be without due tenderness and grace. Look at that stone -- translucent, clear. How soft it seems. how tender its depths! Surely it would melt with a touch? Nay; nor shiver with a stroke! You could not even scratch its surface with hardest steel. That is the diamond, the clearest, softest, fairest and yet the hardest thing we know. "Endure hardness." "With purpose of heart cleave unto the Lord."

And now, having explained this exhortation, let me in a few closing words still farther, and more expressly, apply it. Of course this exhortation is applicable to all who are really

joined to Him -- to the most aged disciples as well as to the youngest; in some sense more tenderly to the aged than to the young. It would be a sorrow beyond the power of words or the reach of tears if we could think of those who have long been joined to the Lord forsaking Him late in life, amid the shades of life's eventide, amid the infirmities of age, just before He would call them into his eternal joy. Sad indeed would it be to think of turning the vessel another way after the long voyage is well-nigh over, and the long-sought shore is almost in sight. Surely, aged brethren, you are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

But following the analogy of the passage, we have in view rather recent converts, whether in middle life or (still more especially) the young. Young friends, I exhort you to cleave with purpose of heart unto the Lord. You are his; be wholly his. You are his; be nobly his -- his by a simple dependence, by a fervent affection, by a steady purpose of the will and of the heart, "cleaving unto your Lord." The more firmly you believe, the more easily you will go on. You are getting now the very tone and manner of your after life, in spiritual, still more than in earthly things. You are sowing your own futurity every day. What shall it be? Shall it be shadow or clearness? Shall it be vacillation or onwardness? Shall it be dalliance with many, or shall it be cleaving to one -- your loving Lord? Ah! Are you turning

your vessel so that you may pass near the glittering realms of pleasure? or are you steering her exactly by the compass of duty, through whatever seas and storms may come? “I exhort you” -- would that I had the tongue of Barnabas of Cyprus to do it -- to leave now “with purpose of heart to the Lord.”

Finally, Are any of you cleaving to Him, and yet holding yourselves apart from his people? You may still be his, although you are not outwardly with them; but it will be more difficult for you. The church is your home if you are his, and you will lose something every year, and every month, that you live out of her fellowship.

In those early days, when the moment of decision came, the very next thing that was thought of, and the next step that was taken, was the step of entrance into the church of God. The very expression, “added unto the Lord,” means, or at least implies, added visibly to his church. “The disciples were all together, and had all things in common.” Now, Christian converts sometimes linger for years before they come to profess the faith among their brethren. And Jesus cares for them all that time; for He is very pitiful and of tender mercy. But He does not approve their delay. He would rather lead them among his sheep, and by the footsteps of his flock, than watch and keep them in their separate ways. “Be not you a wanderer on the mountain, or amid the wide commons and devious ways of the world,

when you may at once enter into the green pastures and abide by the still waters; come with us and we will do you good, for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel.”

There are special times in the circle of the year when this and other questions come seriously before the mind -- anniversaries, that bring their memorial message; the new year; or those special opportunities and seasons of communion which occur from time to time. Will you enter on another period still unconfessed? Will you not rather say as you feel, “I am not my own; I am bought with a price,” “I am the Lord’s.” I must live among those who are the Lord’s; I am not strong enough to stand alone; I must share their privileges, and do my part in their work; I must pay my vows unto the Lord now, in the presence of all his people. -- Alexander Raleigh, D.D.

-----

## THE CHILDREN’S SERVICE

OF A WISE QUEEN’S VISIT TO A WISER KING.

IF I were to ask some little reader, who was the wisest man, I have no doubt I should be readily told it was Solomon. And the Bible does indeed say that he was wiser than all other men that dwelt on the face of the earth. Now

when any person is taller, or older, or richer, or stronger, or more learned than every body else, he soon gets to be talked about. His fame, as we say, flies abroad. This happened in Solomon's case. In all the countries round about Palestine, people began to speak about the wonderful king that was seated on the throne of Israel. Stories were told to show how wise he was. Here was one of them: -- It was said that two mothers who slept together, with their little babes, once came before him for judgment. One of the infants had been overlaid in the night, and had died. Now the mother who had smothered her child, when she saw that it was dead, rose quietly and took away the living infant from the bosom of the other, and put the little dead body of her own in its place. When the mother of the living child woke, she was startled at first, but looking carefully, she saw the cheat. So she came to tell the king, asking him to do justice, and to tell the other woman to give her back her own child. It is my child, cried that other, and I won't give it. So when the king had heard them cry out in this way, contradicting each other, and each claiming the child as her own, he bade them stand aside a little, and said, This one says, the babe is mine, and the other says, No, it is mine; how can we tell? Bring the child here; and since each of these women says it is hers, and we know not which speaks the truth, let us just give each of them a part. Bring a sword to cut it in two. Now the king had no design at all to kill the little helpless



thing, but he took this plan to find out who the mother was. And he soon found it out. For the true mother cried out at once, O don't: give her the child (meaning the other woman), and do not kill it. The other said, Yes, yes, it is but fair; let it be neither yours nor mine, but divide it; for she did not care so much to have a child to love and nurse, as just to see her neighbour childless like herself. This was quite what the king expected, and as soon as he had heard it, he said, pointing to the first that spoke, That is the mother; give her the child; by no means hurt it. So the true mother went away hugging her little son to her bosom, and the people, when they heard of the judgment, wondered at the wisdom of the king.

Among the countries to which the fame of King Solomon spread, Sheba was one. If you look at the map you will see that south from Judea lies the region called Arabia. Sheba was probably that part of Arabia which is lowest down in the map, on the borders of the ocean. Jesus, speaking of it, calls it in the New Testament the uttermost parts of the earth, so that it was the farthest off place known in Solomon's time, or rather the farthest off in the direction in which it lay. This country of Sheba at the time was under the rule of a queen. Our own land has had wise and able queens -- has now a queen whom her many subjects love; and Sheba's ruler was a very thoughtful and wise person. When she heard people tell of the great king

that had risen in Israel, how grand and how full of wisdom he was, she thought she would like to visit him, and hear him speak. There were subjects on which she had long thought, without being able to see into them clearly; and she wished to ask Solomon about them. So she resolved to take a journey to Jerusalem. That was a long way off -- a thousand miles, or thereby. In days when railways make distances seem so little, it is not very hard to travel as far as that; but it was different in the Queen of Sheba's days. That long way could only be gone over by riding on camels. So the queen told her servants to get a train of camels ready, and to lade many of them with the sweet gums and spices of the country, and with gold and precious stones, while herself and a great number of attendants were carried by others. It must have been a fine thing to see this royal procession move through the sandy desert, and to know that the lady who led it was going to be a learner at the feet of wisdom. Our blessed Lord, by referring to it, shows that it was pleasant for God to see it. It was a beautiful instance of earnest pursuit of knowledge. At last the company reached Jerusalem, and no doubt there was a great stir on the coming of so many strangers, with a queen at their head. No doubt Solomon received them very hospitably. But the chief thing that the royal lady was bent on was to hear his wisdom. So she asked him about the subjects that had perplexed her, and he gave her clear and true answers.

The Bible does not say what her questions were about, but I think they must have been about sin, and God, and duty, and hope; perhaps, also, about other subjects of a different kind, about which we are told that Solomon spoke -- the habits of beasts, and birds, and fishes, or about flowers, and plants, and trees. Whatever her questions were about, the king was able to satisfy her by his answers, and she wondered very much indeed at his wisdom.

Afterwards Solomon took the Queen of Sheba to see the temple with its wonderful riches and grandeur, and showed her the way by which he went up, when he went there to worship. She had never seen any thing like it. Then he took her all over his palace, and he let her see all his state, how his table was spread, how the attendants waited, what a retinue of servants he had, how bravely they were dressed, how his wines were served; and putting all things together, the queen was quite overcome with the sight. She did not know how to express strongly enough her sense of Solomon's greatness. So she gave him a very costly present of gold, and precious stones, and sweet gums. Such abundance of the best sort of spices had never been known in Jerusalem before. And ere she left the court of the king to go home to her own land, she made a speech, which served to show her own good character, and her highest delight with all she had seen and heard. The speech was to this effect: --

King Solomon, when I was at home in my own country and among my own people, I heard the report of your great wisdom, but I would not believe it. I thought it could not be true. I thought no mortal man could be so wise as you were said to be. It could only be an instance of how things far away were made greater as they were passed from lip to lip. But finding that still the same story was told, how there was no one on the earth like you, I resolved that I would go and see, and judge for myself. I have come, O king, to find it all true; only, the one-half had not been told me before. You are wiser far than fame said that you was, for you have explained things to me which I thought no one on earth could make plain. Your prosperity, and riches, and grandeur, are also most wonderful. I go back to my own humble country filled with amazement and delight. O king Solomon, yours is a happy people. Happy are your courtiers, happy are all your servants, to have opportunity constantly of seeing your state, and hearing your wise words. May the great God, your own and your father's God, be praised for raising you up to reign over Israel, and judge them so faithfully. Surely he has given in this a proof of the love he has to his own people, whom he redeemed for himself. O king, reign still long and happily! And blessed for ever be the God of Israel, the true and living God!

Solomon was much pleased with the conduct and the words of the Queen of Sheba. So, besides telling her all she

asked him to explain, he informed her of many things she had not known or heard of. He gave her many presents; also indeed whatever she seemed to like and wish he gave her freely. After a time she went away into her own land, carrying many gifts with her. But the best was the wisdom she had learned at the great sage's feet: for wisdom is better than gold or rubies. I suppose, too, the queen would teach her own people much of what she had learned; and we may believe that, in the last day, the King who is wiser and greater than Solomon will have many of his precious redeemed ones from the subjects of the Queen of Sheba. We know, also, from prophecy that hereafter he will receive homage and gifts from the land over which she ruled. May we soon see the prophecy fulfilled!

-----

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Can you give the names of four wise men, none of whom was yet so wise as King Solomon?
2. Can you quote an instance of a mother's affection proved by her conduct toward dead sons?
3. What king was it whose cruel sword was dipped in the blood of little children?

4. What passage in one of the prophets speaks of the strong love a mother has to her infant child?
5. What name did the Lord Jesus give to the Queen of Sheba, and what did he say about her?
6. From the answer to this last question, can you say whether the Queen of Sheba lives still?
7. Can you tell where we read of another queen who showed her good sense by her regard for a very wise man that was one of her husband's ministers?
8. Where do we read of a train of camels laden with sweet spices that were going in a different direction from those of the Queen of Sheba, the passing by of which gave occasion for a very wicked action?

ANSWERS to the foregoing will be found by consulting the following chapters: -- 1 Kings iv.; 2 Sam. xxi.; Matt. ii.; Is. xlix.; Matt. xii.; Dan.v.; Gen. xxxvii.

-----

*Prayer.*

O GOD, who has told us how excellent wisdom is, we pray Thee to make us very desirous to be wise unto salvation. We thank Thee that the Bible is able to teach us saving

wisdom, and we ask Thee to enable us to search and know the truth, in that blessed book, which saves the soul. May we know the heavenly Wisdom, who says to us in one part of that book, I love them that love me, and they that seek me early shall find me. May we prize wisdom far more than riches, and grow in it as we grow in years. O gracious God, teach the blind nations Thy truth. Let them hear the fame of the great King Thou hast set on Thy holy hill of Zion. May the whole earth soon be seen seeking to Him, to learn of his salvation. Soon may the kings of Sheba and Seba offer him gifts: soon may all men be blessed in Him, and all nations call Him blessed. *Amen.*

-----

### EVENING WORSHIP.

O GOD, make us deeply sensible of Thy great mercy to us in the means and ministrations of divine grace. May these means of grace which we now seek to use, be to us as the streams which make glad the city of God, and may we all drink of them and be refreshed, through the grace of our Saviour Christ. *Amen.*

HYMN, or *Psalm* li. 6-12.

COME, Holy Spirit, from above,  
Our longing breasts inspire  
With the pure flame of heavenly love,  
And fan the sacred fire.

Thou comfortest the heavy heart,  
By sin and sorrow press'd;  
Life to the dead Thou dost impart,  
And to the weary rest.

Let no false comfort lift us up  
To confidence that's vain;  
Nor let our faith and courage droop,  
For whom the Lamb was slain.

The Father sent his Son to die,  
The willing Son obey'd:  
The witness Thou, to testify  
The purchase Christ has made.



### HEBREWS III. 1-6.

WHEREFORE, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; 2. Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. 3. For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. 4. For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God. 5. And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; 6. But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

### JOHN I. 15-18.

JOHN bare witness of him, and cried, saying This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. 16. And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. 17. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. 18. No man hath seen God at any time; the only

begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

## JOHN VI. 48-58.

I AM that bread of life. 49. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. 50. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. 51. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread he shall live fore ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. 52. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat? 53. Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. 54. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. 55. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. 56. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood dwelleth in me, and I in him. 57. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. 58. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.

## JOHN X. 1-18.

VERILY, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. 2 But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. 3. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth them by name, and leadeth them out. 4. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. 5. And a stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers. 6. This parable spake Jesus unto them; but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them. 7. Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. 8. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. 10. The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. 11. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. 12. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth

the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth; and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. 13. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. 14. I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. 15. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. 16. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd. 17. Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. 18. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

-----

*Prayer.*

**M**OST Merciful Father, we seek Thy presence at the close of the day. We might have that presence in fullness all day long; but we are so forgetful of Thee, and so carried away on the stream of passing things, or so drawn hither and thither by the distractions of life, that we are glad when

Thou dost spread the calm shadow of Thy presence, and invite us to come within its stillness and solemnity. Be a little sanctuary to us here to-night. May we hear the voice of the Lord God at the cool of the day. May our souls be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and our mouths shall praise Thee when we remember Thee upon our beds.

We thank Thee for the many and rich mercies of this day, for the goodness of Thy house, even of Thy holy place. How precious have been Thy thoughts to us-ward, and how great has been the sum of them! May the good seed of divine truth find in our hearts “good ground” in which to grow, and in our lives a field in which to ripen. Preserve in us every holy impression and helpful memory. Nourish us still by the bread of life; and take us from one sabbath to another, “as from strength to strength,” until we appear in the heavenly Zion before Thee. Save us from spiritual hardness, and coldness, and spiritual indifference; and as Thou are ever about us in Thy tenderness, and Thy love in its many and merciful ministrations is preventing us on every side, O make us tender, and receptive, and contrite, and humble, that we may thus grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

We praise Thee for Him: for all He has told us of Thy fatherhood, for all He has done for us in His atonement, and for all He continues to be and do for us still, in heaven as our High Priest, and here on earth as an ever-present

friend, we praise Thee. Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift. May we rejoice in the Lord alway. May His blood cleanse us every day from all sin. May His suffering explain and sanctify ours, so that all things shall work together for our good.

We especially beseech Thee to grant unto us a deeper and more abiding loyalty to Him as our only rightful Lord, and a more fervent and steady zeal for the service of His kingdom. Ah, how slack we have been, how careless, how unprofitable! How timid our confession! How scanty our toils! Oftentimes we have almost betrayed our Master, and we have never given Him a full and undivided consecration. Help us now to yield ourselves unto God through Christ our Saviour, without reserve. May we now present the living sacrifice, and, overcoming by our faith and resolution the fear of the world and the reluctance of the flesh, may we follow and serve the Lord wholly, and unto the end. O grant us thy Holy Spirit as a spirit of power, to vitalize our convictions and strengthen our principles, and to set our will more fixedly to the duty of each day, until the day of life shall come to its close, and the duty of life shall be all done. By His indwelling may we know the things of Christ in all their clearness and beauty, and be led so to come to Him not only in faith, but in daily consecration and active service, that we may find His yoke to be easy and His burden to be light.

Help us to bear our troubles and perplexities as those who know that they are appointed, and that they are swiftly passing away. Stay us so with grace that we may not weary of the chastening that is for our profit, that we may not fail of the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory which all our suffering should work out. As our mortal days and nights come and go, may we look with a brightening hope to the everlasting and unclouded day of heaven; and when at length, in Thine own good time, we leave the earthly toil and sorrow behind, may we through grace enter into the city where already are gathered together the pilgrim people who have lived and died before us.

May all who are dear to us be of that pilgrim company. May none be left to set their affection on things on the earth. May none despise, or even neglect, the good part. May they hasten to be wise. May they seek the Lord while He is to be found, and call upon Him while He is near. May religion open to them its joys and adorn them with its beauty, and may they and we go, henceforth, in the ways which are pleasantness, and in the paths which are peace.

Bless our native land, and our most gracious sovereign, and all the royal family. Give peace in our times, and turn away Thy judgments. Make known Thy truth, and let Thy glory shine over all the earth, and may Thy will, speedily, be done on earth, even as it is done in heaven.

We now humbly and trustfully commit ourselves to Thee for the night, and even for evermore, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

*Morning.*

**The Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts; if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever.**

For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.

1 Chron. xxviii. 9.      Col. i. 9, 10.



*Evening.*

**For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:

Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy disease;

Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies.

2 Pet. i. 8.      Col. i. 12.      Ps. ciii. 2,3,4.

## **TUESDAY.**

*Morning.*

**For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.**

O continue thy loving-kindness unto them that know thee; and thy righteousness to the upright in heart.

Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name.

He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him.

The people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.

He shall subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet.

Ps. xxxvi. 9, 10. Ps. xci. 14, 15. Dan. xi. 32. Ps. xlvii. 3.

*Evening.*

**And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children.**

And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them

And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the Lord; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God; for they shall return unto me with their whole heart.

And I will remember their sin no more.

Isa. liv. 13. Isa. xlii. 16. Jer. xxiv. 7. Jer. xxxi. 34.

## WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies.**

I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know the Lord.

And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God.

Hos. ii. 19, 20, 23.

*Evening.*

**Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up.**

After two days will he revive us: in the third day, he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight;

O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? For your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away.

I have gone astray like a lost sheep: seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments.

Hos. vi. 1, 2, 4.      Ps. cxix. 176.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.**

For from the rising of the sun, even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering; for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts.

Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.

For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.

He is a buckler to them that walk uprightly.

Hab. ii. 14.      Mal. i. 11.      Prov. ii 5, 6, 7.

*Evening.*

**Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea every good path.**

When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul;

Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee: that thou mayest walk in the way of good men, and keep the paths of the righteous.

For the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it.

But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it.

Prov. ii. 9, 10, 11, 20, 21, 22.

## FRIDAY.

### *Morning.*

**The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul:  
the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple:**

The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart:  
the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the  
eyes:

The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the  
judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much  
fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and the honey-comb.

Moreover, by them is thy servant warned: and in the  
keeping of them there is great reward.

Ps. xix. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

### *Evening.*

**And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but  
now commandeth all men every where to repent.**

And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to  
awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than we  
we believed.

The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us  
therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on  
the armour of light.

Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, and not strife and envying:

But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

Acts xvii. 30.      Rom. xiii. 11, 12, 13, 14.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**Let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.**

For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Wherefore comfort ourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;

And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.

1 Thess. v. 8, 9, 11, 12, 13.

*Evening.*

**When the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.**

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

Dearly beloved, I beseech you, as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.

Ps. xiv. 7.      1 Pet. ii. 9, 10, 11.

# HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

## EIGHTEENTH WEEK.

-----

### MORNING WORSHIP.

O LORD! “Open Thou our eyes that we may behold wondrous things out of Thy law” this day. Especially do thou “reveal Jesus in us.” In the written word may we find the living word. And may our souls partake of Him, and find Him to be “bread of life” and “water of life” to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace. *Amen.*

HYMN, or *Psalms* xxxvi. 5-9.

SWEET is the memory of Thy grace,  
My God, my heavenly King!  
Let age to age thy righteousness  
In songs of glory sing.

God reigns on high, but not confines  
His goodness to the skies:  
Through the whole earth His bounty shines,  
And every want supplies.



With longing eyes Thy creatures wait  
On Thee for daily food:  
Thy liberal hand provides their meat,  
And fills their mouths with good.

How kind are Thy compassions, Lord!  
How slow Thine anger moves!  
But soon He sends His pardoning word  
To cheer the soul He loves.

Creatures of each succeeding race  
Thy power and praise proclaim;  
But saints, who taste Thy richer grace,  
Delight to bless Thy name.

### ISAIAH I. 1-20.

THE vision of Isaiah, the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. 2. Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. 3. The ox knoweth his owner, and the

ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider. 4. Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward. 5. Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. 6. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment. 7. Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers. 8. And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city. 9. Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah. 10. Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah. 11. To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? Saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. 12. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? 13. Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the

new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. 14. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. 15. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. 16. Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil. 17. Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. 18. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. 19. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: 20. But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

#### ISAIAH LVIII. 6-10.

IS not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? 7. Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the

naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? 8. Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee: the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward. 9. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity; 10. And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon-day.

-----

*Prayer.*

LORD of the Sabbath! wilt thou for Jesus' sake grant us a Sabbath's blessing. This is thy day; O, do Thou own and honour it. How blessed to call to mind what Thou hast thyself testified of it, "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." Enable us to enter into its purposes, and in our happy experience realize its wise and gracious designs. By it Thou dost with thine own hand interrupt the course of this busy, perplexing world, and call us to devout meditation and converse with Thee.

May our souls enjoy its rest, as well as our bodies. How good the Lord is, to relieve these labouring bodies: How merciful to calm and compose these anxious minds. O, Lord the Spirit, do Thou possess our souls, while we seek to engage in the hallowed thoughts with which this blessed day is associated; so remembering the Sabbath day that we may keep it holy. We think of creation: Thou didst call us and all things into being. Thou didst form this beautiful world. And O! what a place hast Thou assigned to us in it. Thou didst create us after thine own image, holy and happy. Alas! that we have fallen from that estate. We are not what Thou didst make us at the first. We are fallen into sin. “How is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed!” Yet Thou has not forsaken us. Thou dost create the poor sinners anew in Christ Jesus. Lord may we be the subject of Thy saving grace. May our family be all the adopted of Thy love, restored to Thy favour and fellowship, members of “the family that is named after Jesus. And may we throughout all the hours of the blessed day be admitted to sweet communion with Thee, “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Nor is it creation only of which Thou hast made this day the happy memorial. How it impresses us with the thought of Thy providence! It marks for us the stages of our life. It reminds us how we are hastening on from time to eternity It recalls to our grateful remembrance the mercies of another week. “Thou

hast made the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice.” Thou has supplied our wants, and sustained our labours, refreshed us with sleep, strengthened us with food, clothed us with fitting garments, and protected us by the way. Help us to receive these blessings of Thy providence as the gifts of Thy love in Jesus Christ our Lord. May we account our spared lives and continued blessings as the purchase of his death, no less than the salvation of our souls. So may we ever be found walking with Thee. May ours be a life of faith upon the Son of God. May we see the mark of his blood on every earthly blessing. May we have covenant right to all we enjoy. May we enjoy Christ in every gift of Thy providence. May we have fellowship with Him in it. So may our progress be ever heavenward. May our conversation be there, ever looking for the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour. So may every Sabbath find us a week’s journey nearer to its everlasting rest. And thus, O Lord! may the great subject of the Sabbath be made to engross all our thoughts, even the redemption of which it is the triumphant memorial. Jesus is risen! O may we be risen with him. He hath ascended on high! O that our affections may be set on the things that are above. He hath received gifts for men! O that the graces of his Holy Spirit may be vouchsafed to us in rich abundance. May we be baptized afresh with his love this day. May we have a sweet consciousness of being this

“anointed with fresh oil.” “O Lord, send now prosperity.” May our souls be in health and prosper. May grace and godliness be advanced in us, and in all the world. As the sun of day has set out on his course afresh to bless the earth, and visit all its places and all their people with its light and life; so may the Sun of Righteousness rise with healing in his beams, and dissipate the darkness, and quicken the deadness, and fertilize the barrenness of the souls of men. May this be a day to be remembered. Bless the secret services of every closet. May self-examination, and meditation, and prayer, and the devout study of the word, thus be greatly conducive to personal godliness. May every family altar be set up, and every household visited with the fire of the Spirit from heaven. May fathers and mothers, and sisters and brothers, and masters and servants, and parents and children, and husbands and wives, receive every one a portion of meat in due season. May family religion prosper and prevail. And O! may there be special power in the prayers and praises and preached word and administered ordinances of the sanctuary. Help Thy servants, Lord, the earthen vessels to whom Thou hast committed the treasure of the word, “that the excellency of the power thereof may be of Thee.” Bless all who are their helpers in Christ Jesus, the gifts and governments of the church. Remember graciously the schools of the Sabbath, teachers and taught. Compassionate the afflicted, the

widow, the orphan, and the poor. Be present in every sick-chamber, in every prison-house of men, in every ship that sails on the great deep, with the sailor and the soldier, the missionary at home or abroad, the stranger here and everywhere. O Lord, bless the earth, and the fruits of it, and all that dwell upon it. And soon may the world's Sabbath come, and all enter into its rest. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

**ALMIGHTY** God! wilt Thou bless us in our prayers and praises, and all our exercises upon Thy holy word, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. May Thy word dwell in us richly in all wisdom and understanding and bring forth fruit in us unto life eternal. And may the words of our mouth, and the meditations of our heart, be acceptable in Thy sight through Jesus Christ. *Amen.*



PSALM CXVIII. 22-29.

THAT stone is made head corner-stone,  
Which builders did despise:  
This is the doing of the Lord,  
And wondrous in our eyes.

This is the day God made, in it  
We'll joy triumphantly.  
Save now, I pray thee, Lord; I pray,  
Send now prosperity.

Blessed is he in God's great name  
That cometh us to save:  
We, from the house which to the Lord  
Pertains, you blessed have.

God is the Lord, who unto us  
Hath made light to arise:  
Bind ye unto the altar's horns  
With cords the sacrifice.

Thou art my God, I'll Thee exalt;  
My God, I will Thee praise.  
Give thanks to God, for He is good:  
His mercy lasts always.

## MATTHEW I. 18-23.

NOW the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. 19. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. 20. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. 21. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. 22. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, 23. Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which, being interpreted, is, God with us.

## MATTHEW XXVII. 24-38.

WHEN Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. 25. Then answered all the people and said, His blood be on us, and on our children. 26. Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified. 27. Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers. 28. And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. 29. And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying Hail, King of the Jews! 30. And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. 31. And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe from off him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him. 32. And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross. 33. And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, A place of a skull, 34. And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my

garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots. 36. And, sitting down, they watched him there; 37. And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS. 38. Then were there two thieves crucified with him; one on the right hand, and another on the left.

## HEBREWS II. 10-18.

FOR it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. 11. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, 12. Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. 13. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. 14. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil: 15. And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject of bondage. 16. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. 17. Wherefore in all

things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. 18. For in that he himself both suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

-----

## SERMON XVIII.

“THERE THEY CRUCIFIED HIM.” -- Luke xxiii. 33.

THE hour was come -- the most momentous, the most pregnant with great results, that had ever yet been struck upon the clock of time. It was a momentous hour when the world was created. Then “the morning stars sang together, and the sons of God shouted for joy.” It will be a momentous hour, when the world is summoned to the final judgment, when Jesus shall say, “Come ye blessed of my Father,” and “depart from me, ye cursed.” But the hour was more momentous far, in the estimation of all holy and intelligent beings, when it was announced in the simple utterance of the text, touching the death of Jesus -- “There they crucified him.” Let us, then, turn aside and behold this

great sight -- the realization of what Moses witnessed when he saw “the bush burning but not consumed.” Let us charge our souls to meditate on the *sufferings*, the *Sufferer*, the *words* He uttered, and the portentous *events* which occurred when Christ was crucified.

(1.) In the crucifixion, the first object that arrests our attention is the extreme suffering it inflicted. It has been thus described: -- “Crucifixion is, perhaps, the most ingenious and most perfect invention for mingling torture and death that was ever contrived. Life is to be destroyed; but in this way of destroying it, it is arranged, with savage ingenuity, that no vital part shall be touched. The torturer goes to the very extremities -- to the hands and to the feet -- and fixes his rough and rusty iron among the nerves and tendons there; and the poor sufferer hangs in a position which admits of no change and of no rest, until burning and torturing inflammation can work its way to the seat of life, and extinguish it by the power of suffering.”

This was the manner of death appointed for the Son of God from the beginning: for a thousand years before it had been announced in prophecy -- “They pierced my hands and my feet.” At the time of this prophecy, such a method of torture was probably unknown, and a train of the most singular providences required to be put in motion in order to secure its accomplishment. The Romans had to be formed into a nation; they must become a great people; the world

must be conquered by them; Judea must become a Roman province; and then the charge against Christ must be of such a kind, and the sentence must be pronounced and the judgment executed by such authority that the legal punishment shall be crucifixion. For a time it seemed to be doubtful whether the Romans or the Jews would be the judges in his case -- whether the accusation would be blasphemy or rebellion; and so, whether the punishment would be stoning or crucifixion. The judges sought to cast the responsibility of his death off themselves severally, and to throw it on one another. The Roman judge said to the Jews, "Take ye him and judge home according to your law, for I find no fault in him." But the Jews responded -- "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death;" till at length the clamour of the Jews prevailed -- Pontius yielded -- allowed the charge to go in the form of treason against the Roman emperor -- and sentenced Him to the death of the cross as the punishment which the law inflicted for such a crime. It is expressly affirmed by the evangelist John -- "All this came to pass, that the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled which he spake, signifying what death he should die." All these events were ordered that prophecy might be accomplished.

But why such a prophecy? There must have been a reason, anterior to the prophecy, why such manner of death should be determined upon and fulfilled. The explanation is

in the words of the apostle Paul -- "It became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." The work which Jesus undertook required to be accomplished through the greatest possible amount of human suffering. The interests involved demanded that the Saviour should be a sufferer. The evil of sin, the holiness of God, the integrity of the law, the rectitude of the divine government, as well as the mercy of God, must all be palpably exhibited. There was therefore a propriety in the selection of the most cruel, cursed and ignominious death, as that by which the Son of God should die, when He came forth as the sinners' friend and substitute.

He had Himself counted all the cost. Of his own free will and full purpose He took this position. He assumed human nature that He might be qualified to occupy it. When He cometh into the world He saith -- "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me. Lo! I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will, O God." The anticipation of the scene through which He was to pass appears to have been seldom out of his thoughts. "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" "From that time forth began Jesus to show to his disciples how he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the



elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.” As the hour drew nigh He began to be “sorrowful and sore amazed,” and could not help exclaiming, “My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death.” Yet He drew not back. “He set his face as a flint” to the work He had undertaken. He endured an “agony” under which “his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.” He gave Himself up to the claims of justice and the purposes of mercy, until the last scene of the fearful tragedy was enacted, and the historian could record of Calvary, “there they crucified him.”

(2.) In the second place, meditate on the *Sufferer*. It is impossible to be unmoved while his suffering is contemplated; but when this is associated with the character and dignity of the Sufferer, our conceptions are greatly heightened and our impressions deepened. Even among men, the rank and position of a sufferer influence our sympathy. If it be a king, or a man of eminent worth, who might justly expect to be exempted from the trials of ordinary persons, we are more strongly affected. Let these ideas be applied then to Christ, and what are we to feel respecting the royal and holy Sufferer? It is true, the idea sometimes creeps into our minds that his dignity caused his sufferings to be less acutely felt by Him. But this is a great deception. It was the very reverse. Jesus felt his affliction more than ordinary men. His moral perfection was the

cause of his more keen perceptions. He betrayed often the deepest emotions of distress. He could truly say, "Never was there sorrow like unto my sorrow." His humanity was perfect, and He was "tempted in all things like as we are." Its holiness made Him more susceptible of anguish than any of his brethren. How a good man is agonized when he feels himself suspected of evil conduct, much more when it is charged upon him! How then must Jesus have been exercised when He was counted as "a winebibber," and the companion of sinners? He could truly say, "Reproach hath broken my heart." The Deity that dwelt in his humanity afforded no deliverance from his mental agony. It caused Him to apprehend his position the more clearly and justly. He felt Himself the "just in the room of the unjust." He was conscious of lying under the load of this world's iniquity. He knew it was justly charged upon Him as having consented to bear it. We must not therefore for a moment indulge the idea that the dignity of the Sufferer abated the suffering; rather must we feel that it was proportionably bitter. And so the question remains in all its force, when challenging an answer, "Who is this?" And when we reply, "It is Jesus the Son of God, the Saviour of men," into what reflections are we drawn as we gaze upon his cross?

In the first place, to what views of sin does it open up our minds? For sin He took our nature -- for sin He

tabernacled on earth -- for sin He became “a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief” -- for sin He endured the agony of the garden -- for sin He died on the cross -- and for sin He lay in the bed of death. We do learn somewhat of sin in the desolations with which it has swept the earth, in the bodily pains and the mental conflicts which we endure, and in the awful judgements which a righteous God has denounced against it; but all these fall immeasurably below the testimony which is borne by the one fearful act, that it was sin which so oppressed the Son of God when He hung upon the accursed tree. Oh, shall we not regard it as the abominable thing which God hates, and which He would have us also to hate!

Again, the spectacle of this Sufferer is an impressive lesson on what is required for the expiation and removal of sin. It is recorded that “without shedding of blood is no remission.” “It is impossible for the blood of bulls and of goats to take away sins.” In the nature of the case it could not be, for there is no proportion between the sin and such an expiation. The ancient sacrifices could only typify the one great sacrifice, and direct the attention of men to it -- even to “the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world.”

Yet farther: While the dignity of the Sufferer exposes the futility of all human expedients to atone for sin, it discovers an expiation perfectly worthy and infinitely

available. “The blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, cleanseth us from all sin.” The efficacy of the atonement, by the death of Christ, is declared, and the reason of it is assigned -- He was the Son of God. The Deity dwelt in the humanity that suffered. The essential glory that belonged to the one nature conferred an infinite value on the sufferings that were endured in the other. Thus, “by one sacrifice of himself, hath Jesus perfected for ever them that are sanctified.” “In him we have redemption through his blood.” “We are redeemed not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”

Finally, by this atonement all obstacles to salvation are removed, as well on the part of man as of God. The sinner is assured of the divine favour in Christ. He is taught, “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing unto men their trespasses;” and he is entreated, “Be ye reconciled unto God.” Whenever the love of God is thus apprehended it overcomes the enmity of the natural mind, casts out fear, and restores the rebel to allegiance. At the same time, while the sinner is thus saved, God is glorified. The divine perfections are all honoured by such redemption: the wisdom that devised it -- the love that provided it -- the power that executed it -- the justice that demanded it -- and the faithfulness that applies it. The song of the angels that announced the birth of Jesus is the

appropriate cry of the believer who meditates upon it: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will to men.” Yes, he may say, “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.” In that he may glory, as securing at once the safety of the sinner and the honour of his Judge. Draw nigh with me, then, to this cross, and hearken. From looking at the intensity of the *suffering*, there exhibited, and the dignity of the *Sufferer*, let us proceed to consider --

(3.) In the third place, the *words* uttered by the Sufferer on the cross. It is natural, reasonable, and right that special attention should be paid to the dying sayings of enlightened and godly men. Their words are treasured up as precious relics of the dead, and they are recorded and circulated for the instruction of the living. If this be so in the case of ordinary men, with what interest should we mark the last words of the expiring Saviour? The death which he died afforded good opportunity for such utterances, and well did He improve it. For six hours He was suspended on the cross. During all that time his mind was calm and clear, though the body was tortured and the soul was agonized with fierce assaults from men and devils. The potion usually given to the crucified in order to stupefy them and render them less sensible to pain, appears to have been offered to Him, but He would not drink it. He would meet death in all its terrors with the full possession and

unclouded exercise of all his mental faculties. His sayings were therefore the utterances of his wisdom and grace.

There are seven of them which have been preserved by his biographers, and truly they are memorable. They develop both his own spirit and the nature of that religion which He bequeathed to mankind. Let us draw near, then, to his cross, and catch these sayings of our dying Lord.

Hearken! The scene enacted is thus graphically described in the 22nd Psalm: “Many bulls have compassed me; strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round. They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion. I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax: it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws and thou hast brought me into the dust of death. For dogs have compassed me; the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me; they pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones, they look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.” The tormentors of Jesus are compared to bulls and lions and dogs, tearing Him asunder. But in the midst of their fury his voice is heard. In tender accents it rises to heaven, and cries “Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.” Oh, what a Saviour! what a religion is his!

Forgiveness is its theme. No amount of iniquity is beyond it

pardoning mercy. Learn these two lessons: we may ourselves have pardon, be our sin what it may; and we ought to pardon others, be their offence what it will. Oh, let us ourselves accept the forgiveness of God, and freely extend it to others.

Again, hearken! While Jesus was so earnest for others, his own agony forced attention to Himself, and another cry is heard -- "I thirst." He was truly man, and acutely felt his suffering. Yet in this saying, He looked beyond Himself; for He uttered it that the "Scripture might be fulfilled." Even that cry was turned into mockery, and his tormentors gave Him vinegar to drink, mingled with gall. In this torture of body and mind, must He not have endured, as the sinner's substitute, the pain of the damned which He himself describes, when he represents the rich man to say -- "Father Abraham, send Lazarus that he may dip his finger in water, and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame?" And all this He endured that He might say to us -- "He that drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but it shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

Hearken! There is another cry, more vehement than any yet heard -- "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Jesus was forsaken of God! He gave Him up to those enemies to whom He had said, "This is your hour and the power of darkness." While He was fiercely assaulted by

wicked men and devils, He was left, not without the support of his Father's power, but without the light of his countenance. Then were verified the words, "The enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath smitten my life down to the ground; he hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead. Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me; my heart within me is desolate." Why? That we might never be forsaken -- that we might enjoy the favour of God -- that that we might for ever sing the song of triumph, "Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance! in thy name shall they rejoice all the day; and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted."

A new scene now opens. There were two malefactors crucified with Christ, one on either side. Of these, the heart of one was smitten on the cross. There at the eleventh hour of his life, he was convinced of sin; and having his mind opened to discern the Saviour in Jesus, he prayed to Him, and said, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." The reply is another of Christ's last words -- "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." Simple, but weighty words! No sinner beyond the reach of mercy! No time too late to seek salvation! No prayer of penitence and faith refused! The soul made meet for heaven whenever it embraces the Saviour! And as soon as it is released from the body admitted to the presence and enjoyment of God!



Full, however, as eternity was in the eye of the Saviour, He did not forget the interests of his people in time. Another of his memorable sayings makes this apparent: "There stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home." What a heart was here! In the midst of his own agony He did not neglect to make provision for his aged and, no doubt, widowed mother. He is the same yet, and saith to his poor suffering people, "Your heavenly Father knoweth ye have need of these things," and intimates that He will provide for them. What an example to us! We must respect the relations of life, remember their claims, discharge their duties, and do all in a spirit of tenderness and love.

Hearken once more! The tragedy approaches to a termination. Jesus knew that all things were now accomplished, and saith, "It is finished." What is finished? Let the familiar words of the paraphrase be our reply --

"'Tis finish'd! was His latest voice;  
These sacred accents o'er  
He bow'd his head, gave up the ghost,

And suffer'd pain no more.

“’Tis finish’d! The Messiah dies  
For sins, but not his own  
The great redemption is complete,  
And Satan’s pow’r o’erthrown.

“’Tis finish’d! All his groans are past;  
His blood, his pains, and toils,  
Have fully vanquished our foes,  
And crowned him with their spoils.

““’Tis finish’d! Legal worship ends,  
And gospel ages run;  
All old things now are pass’d away,  
And a new world begun.”

One other saying only He uttered, and with it “He gave up the ghost.” “With a loud voice,” indicative of a sound mind, He cried, “Father into thy hands I commend my spirit.” In the last moment of life he manifested the immateriality of the soul, and its independence of the body. He exhibited his power to dispose of his own life, and He “gave his soul an offering for sin.” He taught us by his example how to die, yielding our souls into the hands of our heavenly

Father, reconciled to us by his blood. And He gave a premonition of the time when, as He presented his own spirit to God, so He shall at last present all his people “a glorious church: not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.”

Thus Jesus died when they crucified Him. Let us now complete our mediation on the scene, noticing --

(4.) In the fourth and last place, the portentous *events* that happened while Christ was crucified.

Portentous they truly were. They cannot be accounted for on natural principles. They were the voice of God speaking to guilty man, and proclaiming the deep interest of heaven in the deed then transacted upon earth.

“There was darkness over all the land from the sixth till the ninth hour.” This must have been supernatural, for it occurred at the time of the Passover, which was always observed at the full moon, when there could be no eclipse; and it commenced at noon, and continued for the space of three hours. It is recorded of a heathen philosopher that he exclaimed, “Either nature’s God is suffering, or the world’s destruction is come.” Ancient historians, independent of the Scriptures, relate the fact. And what saith it? He that made the sun suspended its influence. The sun of day bore testimony to the Sun of Righteousness.

The one veiled his face in shame while the glory of the other was obscured. God gave the last sign of his indignation to a deluded race, if perhaps they might be awe-struck, and led to repentance.

Nor was this the only prodigy. "The veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom." It was that which separated holy place from the most holy. It was so constructed for strength, and of such materials, that no human hand could have thus torn it. And the import of the sin is well explained by the apostle Paul, when he thus manifestly refers to it in his explanation of the Jewish ritual: -- "Having therefore boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus; by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." The rent veil is the Saviour's humanity. Through his death there is access to all -- Jew and Gentile, bond and free.

More impressive still than either of these signs, we are informed farther, -- "The earth did quake, and the rocks rent, and the graves were opened, and many of the bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and appeared unto many." Earth sympathized with heaven in

contemplating this scene. Both owned the sovereignty of their dying Creator. Death itself bore witness to Jesus, and proclaimed Him to be the resurrection and the life. All nature attested his innocence, divinity, and triumph. There was but one exception. Alas! It was found in him on whose account He suffered -- in man.

In conclusion, let me remind you, there is what the Scriptures call “crucifying the Son of God afresh, and putting him to an open shame.” This is done by unbelief, when we refuse Him in his mediatorial work: by impenitence, when we harden our hearts against Christ and his claims; and by any sin when it is knowingly committed, against the very design of his death, which is to destroy it. Shall we be thus guilty? In the view of his cross let us reply, “No! no!”

I hear from every voice, What then shall we do? --

1. Let us by faith accept the crucified one. Let us say, with self-appropriation, “He of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.” We are “complete in Him.”

2. Let us in penitence wait upon Him. He has given us this word of appeal, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” We will pour out our hearts before Him, and plead that “the sacrifices of God are a broken and contrite heart.

3. Let us submit to Him This is his demand:  
“Yield yourselves unto God” -- our understanding, to be taught by Him; our will, to be ruled by Him; our affections, to be set upon Him; our life to be devoted to Him; all we are, all we have, all we can do; owning “we are not our own, but bought with a price, and should glorify Him in our body and spirit, which are his.”

4. Let us confess Him. Be it ours to say, “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.”  
“What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people. I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, in the courts of the Lord’s house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem! Praise ye the Lord.” -- James Morgan, D.D.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

### OF THE WICKED QUEEN JEZEBEL.

THE land of Canaan, before the people of Israel were placed in it by God, was full of very vile worshippers of idols. That, indeed, was the reason why God took the country from them, and gave it to the children of Abraham, his 'friend.' God was, therefore, very desirous that his own nation should not learn to serve stocks and stones, like the race that was in Canaan before them. Now, as all around them -- in Moab and Syria, and Philistia -- the people followed idols, it was necessary to keep Israel from having too much or too close intercourse with them, lest they should come to do as their neighbours did. So God made a strict law that his people were not to make marriages with idolatrous women of the nations around them. If, indeed, the women became worshippers of the true God, like Ruth the Moabitess, there was nothing to prevent their marrying into the families of Israel; but so long as they were idolaters, the sons of God's people were forbidden to wed them. The law, however, was often broken. The wise king Solomon himself in his later years sinned greatly in this respect, and took unto him many strange or foreign wives, and these became a

sad snare to him. So much so, that we are told the very man who built the grand temple to Jehovah in Jerusalem, built also temples on hills that could be seen from Zion to different heathen gods. This was a painful proof how needful and how wise the law was which forbade these mixed marriages.

If Solomon himself, after all God had done for him and by him, fell thus--

“Beguiled by fair idolatresses,” we need not wonder that when the division of the nation into ten tribes and two had taken place, and the former had been cut off by their kings from the regular worship of the true God, the law against intercourse with idolaters should be greatly disregarded among them. One of their kings, moreover, has become infamous for the open example of disobedience which he set in this manner, and for the wickedness into which it led him. His name was Ahab. He reigned in Samaria, which his father Omri had built. He was not content with the idolatry of the kings who went before him, who, led by Jeroboam, worshipped calves in Bethel, calling them representatives of the God of Israel, but prepared the way for bringing in the service of other gods by taking to wife the daughter of the king of the Zidonians. Her name was Jezebel. She was a very clever, unscrupulous, determined woman, given to



the worship of Baal, and resolved to make Israel honour her god. She made Ahab do much as she liked; so that he built a temple for Baal in Samaria, and reared an altar in it, and planted a grove, and allowed a swarm of priests to minister to the idol. Jezebel in her zeal did still more. She sought out, for the purpose of killing them, all the prophets of the Lord, and she succeeded in destroying many of them. Indeed, she would have cut them all off, but that one of the king's servants, who feared God, made himself their friend, and hid a hundred of them in two caves, and fed them there.

There was one other prophet of truth whom the Lord himself hid from her rage, after sending him with a message of woe to Samaria. This was the great Elijah, who was at last carried up into heaven by a chariot of fire. One day he suddenly appeared in the streets of the royal city, and said that there would not be rain or dew in the land till he should give the word. Then he went out of sight to the place where God bade him go. Where he went, what happened meanwhile, and how he showed himself again, and gathered the people together and gave them proof that Baal was no god, I must tell you in a separate story, for the whole is very wonderful. Here, in connection with the wicked queen of whom I am now speaking, it is enough to say

that after letting the people see how foolish and wicked it was to forsake Jehovah for Jezebel's idol, Elijah had them slay four hundred and fifty priests of Baal whom he had put to shame that day. This was God's just punishment of men that had led his people into sin. But it filled the queen with rage, and she swore a great oath by her gods that she would take the life of Elijah next day. And in the fierceness of her passion she sent him a message to say that she had sworn she would.

It often happens that people in a passion do things which defeat their own ends. Jezebel did not think that, by sending her fierce message, she was warning the prophet, and giving him time to flee. But surely Elijah, the chosen prophet of the Lord, did not need to flee. God could surely protect his servant even against Jezebel's wrath. That is quite true; and Elijah should have trusted in his power and waited for directions what to do. But to show us how weak the strongest are in themselves, God allowed the prophet to get notice of the queen's threat, and to act according to his own feelings. So when Elijah heard that the wife of Ahab had sworn to take his life, he who the day before had boldly faced the whole host of Baal's priests, and braved the king and his court, arose and fled. It is sad to think of one so great and strong becoming weak like other men; but good lessons came out of the failure of

Elijah's faith, both to himself at the time, and to us who now read the account. But what these were, and how they were given, I will tell you also in another story. Here I must finish what is to be said about wicked Jezebel.

After Elijah had come back from his flight something happened which brought him face to face again with King Ahab, and led him to foretell the doom of himself and his bad queen. The thing was this. A man of the name of Naboth had a vineyard in Jezreel, very near to the palace of King Ahab. This vineyard the king thought would make a nice garden for herbs; so he offered to buy it from its owner for money, or to give another in exchange for it. But Naboth would not sell it on any account, because, he said, it was the inheritance he had gotten from his fathers. Now it happens with children, as you may know, who get their own way in everything, as kings were wont to do of old, that when anything they wish for is denied them, they fall into a pet about it, and this is exactly what Ahab did. Man though he was, and king, he behaved like a weak spoiled child; he went home, and lay down upon his bed, and would not eat his dinner. When the queen heard of it, she came to see what was the matter. But when Ahab told her what ailed him, she said, Are you the king of Israel or not, that you should fret about

not getting what you may take when you like? Get up, and go to dinner; I will get you the vineyard you want. On that, she went her way, and wrote letters to the magistrates and great people of the town where Naboth lived, and told them to get men to witness against him that he had spoken treason against God and the king, and to have him publicly tried, and condemned, and stoned to death. The nobles and elders, sad to say, did as the cruel queen bade them. They got men to swear lies against Naboth, and passed sentence on him, that he should be stoned to death. ‘Then they carried him forth out of the city,’ says the Bible, ‘and stoned him with stones, that he died.’ After this they sent word to the queen that they had done her bidding, and she went to Ahab and said, ‘Naboth is dead, go now and take possession of his vineyard;’ and away for this purpose the king went.

Perhaps you say here, when you think of Naboth being killed and robbed, why does God allow such things to happen? It is a question that has often been put. I cannot answer it fully. But there are some things which I may venture to say, and which you may understand. I think God allows such things to be done for one reason, that it may be seen how bad the sinful heart is when it has its way. Then he lets them happen that there may be room for patience and forgiveness on

the part of those who are cruelly wronged. He allows them, that he may give to some up in heaven sufferers' and martyrs' crowns. One thing more: he lets them be done without punishing them at once, that he may give the doers space to repent, and if they do not, may show that sin always in the end finds the sinner out.

So it was with Ahab and Jezebel. When the king went down to the vineyard of Naboth, Elijah met him, and told him the Lord knew all about his murder and his robbery, and said that the dogs would lick his blood where they had licked that of Naboth, and would eat the flesh of Jezebel by the wall of Samaria. And so it came about. For after that, Ahab was shot with an arrow at a great battle with the Syrians, and the chariot he was taken home in was covered with gore from his wound, and was afterwards washed at a pool, round which the dogs came lapping up the blood. So, too, with the wicked queen. A captain of the name of Jehu rebelled against Ahab's son, and took the city Samaria, when some of Jezebel's own servants threw her out of a window, and she was trampled on and torn, and eaten up of dogs, according to the word of the Lord.

The lessons of this painful story are such as these:  
-- Success in sin for a time does not secure against punishment. If we do not repent of sin, it will destroy

us. God is strong to save, but he is also strong to smite. The word of the Lord stands sure.

-----

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Where is Abraham called the friend of God?
2. What was the name of the great idol of Philistia?
3. Where is the law against the Israelites marrying idolaters, with the reason for it, to be found?
4. In whose reign were the twelve tribes divided into ten and two?
5. Do you know the name of a wicked queen of Judah, who was, like Jezebel, a murderess? Whom did she kill?
6. What was the name of Ahab's servant who saved a hundred prophets' lives?
7. What terrible slaughter befel the worshippers of Baal by another hand than that of Elijah?
8. Who was it that wrote letters to get rulers of a city to commit not one, but seventy murders, at once?
9. Who was stoned in New Testament times for pretended blasphemy?

10. In which of the Psalms does the writer tell us how perplexed he was with the prosperity of the wicked?

ANSWERS to the foregoing questions may be found by consulting James ii.; Judges xvi.; 1 Sam. v.; Deut. vii., Ezra ix.; 2 Chron. x.; 2 Kings xi.; 1 Kings xviii.; 2 Kings x.; 2 Kings x.; Acts vii.; Psalm lxxiii.

-----

*Prayer.*

O LORD God, the Ruler of all the earth, King of kings and Lord of lords, we thank Thee for the peaceful and happy rule of our beloved Queen. We thank Thee that Thou hast cast our lot in a land where one who is kind and just and noble reigns. We pray Thee to comfort and care for our Royal Mistress, and to prolong her life, and establish her throne in righteousness. Break the power of all cruel and unrighteous and bloody kings, and change their hearts. Have pity on all who are imprisoned or made in any way to suffer for Christ's sake. Give them grace to be patient, faithful to truth, and willing rather to die than to deny Christ. Give them deliverance or the crown of the martyrs. O God,

let not our trust in Thee at any time fail, and keep us always on the side of lovingkindness and truth and peace in the earth. All we ask is in Jesus' name. *Amen.*

-----

## EVENING WORSHIP.

O THOU, who art the fountain of all truth and holiness, whom to know is life eternal, possess our souls with the might of thy grace, so that all the strongholds of Satan, and whatever is opposed within us to Thy supreme authority, may be overturned and brought into the obedience of Jesus Christ. Deliver us from all ambitious desires to advance our selfish interests, all prejudice against, and sinful ignorance of, Thy word, and help us to acknowledge Thy revealed will as the rule of our life, Thy precious promises as the fulfilment of our hopes, and union with Thyself as joy unspeakable, that we may believe and live. *Amen.*



HYMN, *or Psalm* cxlix. 1-5.

PRAISE the Lord, who reigns above,  
And keeps His courts below;  
Praise the holy God of love,  
And all His greatness show:  
Praise Him for his noble deeds,  
Praise Him for His matchless power;  
Him from whom all good proceeds  
Let earth and heaven adore.

Publish, spread to all around  
The great Immanuel's name;  
Let the trumpet's loudest sound  
Him Lord of Hosts proclaim:  
Praise Him, every tuneful string,  
All the reach of heavenly art;  
All the powers of music bring --  
The music of the heart.

Him in whom they move and live,  
Let every creature sing;  
Glory to their Maker give,  
And homage to their King.  
Hallow'd be His name beneath,

As in heaven on earth adored!  
Praise the Lord in every breath;  
Let all things praise the Lord!

PSALM XXII. 1-31.

MY God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? 2. O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent. 3. But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel. 4. Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them. 5. They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded. 6. But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people. 7. All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head saying, 8. He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him. 9. But thou art he that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts, &c.

## HEBREWS VIII.

NOW of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; 2. A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. 3. For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer. 4. For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: 5. Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount. 6. But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. 7. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. 8. For, finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make andw covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:

9. Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. 10. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: 11. And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man is brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. 12. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. 13. In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.

-----

*Prayer.*

O LORD, we began thy holy day with Thee, and with Thee we desire to end it, through Jesus Christ. We have waited upon Thee, the God of ordinances, and of all the grace thereby imparted to sinful men. And now

we beseech Thee, for the sake of our Advocate whom Thou hearest always to make this day and its duties effectual for all the gracious ends which it is designed to serve. It is the Lord's day! O that it may be found we have been in the Spirit upon it. May we have reason and grace to say of Him, and of our fellowship with Him, "We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the father, full of grace and truth; and of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace." Of the blessed fruit of union and communion with Jesus may we be ourselves sweetly conscious, and may it be manifested to others in our sanctified walk and conversation. Give us reason and grace to say, "Did not our hearts burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the scriptures." And may all that see us "take knowledge of us, that we have been with Jesus." As it was with thy servant Moses, so may it be with us, whose face shone when he came down from the mount of communion. We have been reading and hearing thy most holy word; may its power in us and over us and by us be felt increasingly. May we understand it better, love it more, and obey it as we have never yet done. May it prove to be profitable for doctrine, enlightening us more fully in the knowledge of "the truth as it is in Jesus;" for reproof, making us better

acquainted with ourselves, and especially with our sins and shortcomings; for correction, recovering us from our errors, infirmities, and backslidings; and for instruction in righteousness, building us up in our most holy faith, and making us thoroughly furnished unto all good works. So may we “grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” As many of us as have enjoyed the privileges of the sanctuary, do Thou help to manifest that we have met with the God of the sanctuary. Save us from trusting in any outward observances, but may it be apparent to us and to others that they who “are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God, and still bring forth fruit abundantly.” May we have grace to go on our way rejoicing, as strong men refreshed with wine; and on the strength of the spiritual food with which we have been fed may we be enabled to journey upward and onward, till we come to the mount of God. Wherein any of us have enjoyed and embraced opportunities of doing as well as receiving good, may it be found that we have not laboured in vain, either for ourselves or others. May we know that in doing good we get good, and in watering others we are ourselves watered. May similar blessings rest on all those with whom we have been associated in exercises of worship or well-doing. May

the church of Christ be greatly edified. Cause it to rise and shine with the radiance of divine truth. May all its members be “epistles of Christ, known and read of all men.” May its ministers and its missionaries and teachers be all “burning and shining lights, holding forth the word of life.” And may they approve themselves to be witnesses for God in all the earth. Refreshed and quickened and strengthened by the return of this blessed day, and all its divine associations, may they lie down upon their beds, as it closes, with peaceful minds and grateful recollections. Raised up in health of mind and of body on the coming day, may they and we all once more begin the business of the week better prepared for all that is before us in it. May we have increased strength to resist the temptations that may assail us, as well as with more fidelity to discharge its duties; or growing patience to bear its sorrows, or improve its dispensations. In all the circumstances and relations of life may we be enabled to walk worthy of the high vocation with which we have been called. May we be enabled to act on the heavenly counsel, “As he who hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation, because it is written, Be ye holy for I am holy; and pass the time of your sojourning here in fear, forasmuch as ye know ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver

and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without spot.” In our personal deportment and inner life may we be more pure and circumspect. In our worldly business may we be more upright and sincere. In our intercourse with others may we be forgiving, forbearing, generous, and benevolent. In our family may we be tender and loving, and full of holy sympathy. In all that is given to do may we hear Christ saying, “Occupy till I come.” May it be our care and endeavour to “serve our day and generation” in the prospect of falling asleep in Jesus. O that it may be our high and holy purpose to leave the world better than we found it. And so may we prove to all men the profit of the holy Sabbath, in these blessed and gracious fruits and influences. May we realize the experience of the godly in other days, of whom it is upon record -- “They go from strength to strength; every one of them in Zion appeareth before God.” Thus may our Sabbath end in peace. *Amen.*

-----



## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

#### *Morning.*

**Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:**

Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

Likewise also the cup after supper, saying This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

1 Cor. v. 7, 8. Matt. xxvi. 26. Luke xxii. 19, 20. Matt. xxvi. 28.

#### *Evening.*

**Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;**

And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

And did all eat the same spiritual meat;

And did all drink the same spiritual drink; (for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ:)

But with many of them God was not well pleased.

1 Cor. x. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

## **TUESDAY.**

*Morning.*

**The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?**

For we, being many, are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.

But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.

Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

1 Cor. x. 16, 17, 20.      1 Cor. xi. 27.

*Evening.*

**The Lord preserveth the simple: I was brought low,  
and he helped me.**

What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits  
towards me?

I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name  
of the Lord.

I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence  
of all his people.

As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my  
beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with  
great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.

He brought me to the banqueting-house, and his banner  
over me was love.

Ps. cxvi. 6, 12, 13, 14.      Song. ii. 3,4.

**WEDNESDAY.**

*Morning.*

**I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of  
the water of life freely.**

And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of wines on the lees; of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.

And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations.

He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it.

Rev.xxi. 6.      Isa. xxv. 6, 7, 8.

*Evening.*

**I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.**

I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.

John vi. 35, 51, 53, 54.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**John answered them, saying, I baptize with water:  
but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not;**

He it is, who, coming after me, is preferred before me,  
whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.

The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him and  
saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin  
of the world!

This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man  
which is preferred before me; for he was before me.

And I knew him not: but that he should be made  
manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with  
water.

John i. 26, 27, 29, 30, 31.

*Evening.*

**And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye  
baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism.**

Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism  
of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should  
believe on him which should come after him, that is, on  
Christ Jesus.

When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Acts xix. 3, 4, 5.      Matt. xxviii. 19.

## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**Except man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.**

He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

And the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?

And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

John iii. 5.    Mark xvi. 16.    Acts viii. 36, 37, 38.

*Evening.*

**What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?**

God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Rom. vi. 1, 2, 3, 4.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.**

For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

1 Cor. xii. 13. Gal. iii. 26, 27, 28, 29.

*Evening.*

**Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.**

And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

Blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

And having principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink.

Col. ii. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16.



# Home Preacher or Church in the House

## Nineteenth Week

---

### Morning Worship

O LORD, we beseech Thee to compose our minds for Thy worship and service. Draw Thou near to us, as we now draw near to Thee. Grant us the aids of Thy Holy Spirit, that all our duties, begun, carried on, and ended in Thee, may redound, through Jesus, to Thy praise and glory.

*Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* lxvi. 13, 14, 16-20.

COME ye that know and fear the Lord,  
And raise your thoughts above;  
Let every heart and voice accord  
To sing that “God is Love!”

This precious truth his word declares,  
And all his mercies prove;  
Jesus, the Gift of gifts appear,  
To show that “God is Love!”

Behold his patience, bearing long  
With those who from Him rove:  
Till mighty grace their hearts subdues,  
To teach them -- "God is Love!"

The work begun is carried on  
By power from heaven above,  
And every step, from first to last,  
Declares that "God is Love!"

O may we all, while here below,  
This best of blessings prove;  
Til warmer hearts, in brighter worlds,  
Proclaim that "God is Love!"

#### MICAH VI. 1-14.

HEAR ye now what the Lord saith; Arise, contend  
thou before the mountains, and let the hills hear thy voice.  
2. Hear ye, O mountains, the Lord's controversy, and ye  
strong foundations of the earth: for the Lord hath a  
controversy with his people, and he will plead with Israel.  
3. O my people, what have I done unto thee? and wherein  
have I wearied thee? testify against me. 4. For I brought

thee up out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of servants; and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. 5. O my people, remember now what Balak king of Moab consulted, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him from Shittim unto Gilgal; that ye may know the righteousness of the Lord. 6. Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt-offerings with calves of a year old? 7. Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgressions, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? 8. He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? 9. The Lord's voice crieth unto the city, and the man of wisdom shall see thy name: hear ye the rod, and who hat appointed it. 10. Are there yet the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked, and the scant measure that is abominable? 11. Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances, and with the bag of deceitful weights? 12. For the rich men thereof are full of violence, and the inhabitants thereof have spoken lies, and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth. 13. Therefore also will I make thee sick in smiting thee, in making thee desolate because of thy sins. 14. Thou shalt eat, but not be satisfied; and thy casting down shall be in the midst of thee; and thou

shalt take hold, but shalt not deliver; and that which thou deliverest will I give up to the sword.

-----

*Prayer.*

O LORD GOD ALMIGHTY! We desire to come into Thy presence on this the morning of Thy holy Sabbath, rejoicing that we are again permitted, in Thy good providence, to see the light of another day of the Son of man. Our pillow, last night, might have been made the pillow of death. But Thou hast, in Thy mercy, spared us; we are still among the living to praise Thee. We would, with united hearts, set up our Ebenezer of thankfulness, and write upon it the inscription, "The Lord hath helped us hitherto." May this Sabbath prove a day of holy rest to us -- a rest from sin, and a rest in God. May we welcome with gladness the return of its peaceful hours, and be enabled now to worship Thee in the beauty of holiness.

Lord, we are unworthy to come into thy presence, or so much as to lift up our eyes to the place where Thou, in glory, dwellest. What coldness in our prayers, what imperfection in our best attempts to serve Thee! We have not been living mindful of Thee. We have too often taken

our blessings as matters of course. We have had unthankful spirits in the midst of daily tokens of unmerited mercy. We have not been feelingly alive to Thy wondrous grace and love in Jesus. We have not felt, as we ought, the attractive power of His cross. Our own hearts condemn us, and Thou art greater than our hearts, Thou knowest all things. All our hope is in the Son of Thy love. There is nothing but the sacrifice and continual intercession of our Great High Priest between us and everlasting destruction. O hide us in the clefts of this smitten Rock. We *have* no other Saviour -- and blessed be Thy name, we *need* no other. Bring us to live more under the constraining power of His love. May our hearts become living altars, and our lives living sacrifices. Give us a tender conscience, a broken spirit, holiness of heart, consistency of conduct, uprightness of life. May sin be increasingly hated. My holiness be increasingly loved. May we live as seeing Thee who art invisible. Strengthen us, good Lord, by the grace of Thy Holy Spirit, against all the temptations of a world lying in wickedness. May we live under the power of renewed natures and purified affections; and seek, that, as each returning Sabbath finds us nearer heaven, it may find us better prepared for it.

Bless all Thy people this day throughout the Christian world. May multitudes be added to the church, of such as shall be saved. Strengthen Thy ministering servants. May

they be enabled to proclaim the whole counsel of God; and may Thy people be enabled to worship Thee in Spirit and in truth. Look in great kindness on any who may be prevented from waiting upon Thee in the services of the sanctuary. Transform every house of mourning, and every chamber of sickness, into the house of God and the gate of heaven. Have mercy on the afflicted. Spare and prolong valuable lives. Prepare the dying for death; and may the bereaved be enabled, in lowly submission to say, "Father, not our will, by Thine be done!"

We commend our beloved friends to Thy paternal keeping. May the Lord watch between them and us when we are absent one from another. Sanctify them in body, soul, and spirit, that they may at last be presented faultless before the presence of Thy glory with exceeding joy. Hear these our unworthy prayers; and all that we ask is for the Redeemer's sake. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

BLESSED Lord, with whom is the residue of the Spirit, most mercifully grant us now Thy benediction and

blessing. Open Thy holy scriptures to us. May we receive with meekness the ingrafted word which is able to save our souls, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* xl. 1-5.

SMILE on our souls, and bid us sing,  
In concert with the choir above,  
The glories of our Saviour King,  
The condescensions of His love!

Amazing love! that stoop'd so low,  
To view, with pity's melting eye,  
Vile men deserving endless woe!  
Amazing love! did Jesus die!

He died, to raise to life and joy  
The vile, the guilty, the undone;  
O let his praise each hour employ,  
Till hours no more their circles run!

He died! -- ye seraphs tune your songs,  
Resound, resound the Saviour's name!  
For ev'n immortal, heavenly tongues

Can never reach the wondrous theme!

LUKE VII. 1-10.

NOW, when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum. 2. And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die. 3. And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant. 4. And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this: 5. For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue. 6. Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself, for I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof: 7. Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed. 8. For I am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.

When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great



faith, no, not in Israel. 10. And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.

## EPHESIANS VI. 1-13.

CHILDREN, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. 2. Honour thy father and thy mother, (which is the first commandment with promise,) 3. That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. 4. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as to the Lord, and not to men: 8. Knowing, that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. 9. And ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening; knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him. 10. Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. 11. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the

darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. 13. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

## SERMON XIX.

“AND WHEN JESUS WAS ENTERED INTO CAPERNAUM, THERE CAME UNTO HIM A CENTURION, BESEECHING HIM, AND SAYING, LORD, MY SERVANT LIETH AT HOME SICK OF THE PALSY, GRIEVOUSLY TORMENTED. AND JESUS SAITH UNTO HIM, I WILL COME AND HEAL HIM.  
-- Matt. viii. 5-7.

THE Sun of Righteousness had arisen on “Galilee of the Gentiles” -- the region and shadow of death -- with healing in His wings. From the summit of the Mount of Beatitudes, to the poor the gospel had been preached. On the plain at its base, or by the shores of the Lake, a leper had been cleansed. And now, no sooner had the Divine Philanthropist entered “His own city,” than a new suitor is at His feet. A Roman officer, whose servant was stretched on a couch of pain and death, comes to receive fresh proof of

the Divine benediction, so recently uttered -- “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.”

Let us look, FIRST, to the Suppliant’s *previous history*.

He was “a centurion,” or captain in the army of Herod -- stationed, with a hundred men under his command, in the barracks at Capernaum. We know nothing as to how long he had been resident in this town of Galilee. While there, however, he had become a Gentile proselyte. In his intercourse with the Jewish mind, he had been led to a knowledge of the true God. The bewildering polytheism, the ancestral Religion of his own land, into which he had been initiated in his youth, with its “lords many and gods many” -- the heartless vices and growing profligacy of Roman manners -- contrasted unfavourably with the sublime simplicity of the worship of Israel’s one Jehovah, and the lofty morality inculcated by the Mosaic law. Had religion been with him merely a stepping-stone in professional advancement, -- life a struggle for pay and place, to stand well at the government palace of Caesarea and Tiberias -- he had only to become the sycophant of Herod, to swear by the gods of Olympus and the Capitol, and plunge into the vices of these libertine courts.

But, in that vast Roman empire, God was preparing many minds for a kingdom whose glory and vastness the Caesar had never dreamt of. One of these “hidden ones” was this Capernaum soldier. He looked beyond the glitter

and pageantry of earthly pomp and power, to more enduring realities, and sought to have the yawning gulph of his heart's deep necessities filled with the great, the good and the true. The simple yet sublime revelations of the hebrew theology had thrown a flood of light on his path, and resolved many perplexities and doubts, whose solution he had vainly sought in his own mythological systems. An alien by birthright, he became by faith a child of Abraham; a stranger and foreigner, he had become a fellow-citizen of the household of God; and better still, he lived under the influential power of that religion which he had espoused as his creed.

We are called upon here to observe, very notably in his case, how true piety ennobles and elevates the character. Moralities -- natural virtues may, in themselves, be lovely and of good report; but when the soul in its actions and motives is pervaded and renovated by grace, it is like that same landscape bathed in sunshine, sparkling with a glory and beauty unpossessed before. Thus did the fear of God operate in the case of this centurion. It made him a better Man, a better Friend, a better Master, and perhaps a better Soldier too.

Let us look to two of these attributes as illustrated in the narrative we are now considering: --

1. *He was a good Neighbour. "He loveth our nation, and hath built us a synagogue,"* or literally, "He hath built *the* synagogue for us."

Rooted was the hatred and scorn with which pagan nations regarded the nation of Israel. But this man had been taught, for its own and "the Fathers' sakes," to love it and he gave the most substantial proof of the reality of this affection; for in the centre of Capernaum, or close by the shores of the Lake, rose conspicuous the one synagogue of the town -- a strange and unwonted memorial for a Gentile Roman to raise at his own expense.

See here how religion makes the soul unselfish! Many a man, if he be well personally, is indifferent how his neighbor or the world fares. Perhaps unloved and uncared for himself, he thinks there is the less call upon him to love or care for others. He is in the midst of those who have no great claim upon him. He is too glad of the excuse or apology for steering clear of what would touch his means, or invade his time, or saddle him with new cares and responsibilities. It is the old plea, "Am I my brother's keeper?" "No! I will live for myself -- I will clutch my gold the faster, and die amid hoards of plenty. I am a Gentile -- the blood of old Romulus is in my veins -- the memory of a proud line of heroes is my heir-loom. What care I for these dogs of Jews, these bigot Hebrews? I shall do Caesar's work, and pocket Caesar's pay. I shall rear my villa on this

lake, and have my courtiers in the luxuries of my table, and the splendours of my retinue. What concern have I with these boors of Galilee? I am sent to curb their turbulent spirit. I will render to Caesar the things that are Caesars. What have I to do with rendering to their God the things that are God's?"

So speak many now; but so spake not this great and good centurion. He had riches, and he would use these riches; not for self or sin, but for the glory of that great Being he had been led to revere. Not to consecrating his own soul as a living temple of faith, and love, and grateful obedience, he had upreared a sanctuary wherein his poorer fellow-citizens might serve the God of their fathers, and where they would read and hear that law which had made him wiser and better than all his heathen teachers. The Roman soldier was sent to repress and subjugate by the sword; but the sword was sheathed, and he conquered by the weapon of kindness. He loved the nation he had been taught from his infancy to hate, and the God he served was now about to make good in his experience the old promise "Them that bless Israel I will bless."

Himself and his servant being both by birth heathens, he felt as if he dared not personally approach the great Jewish Teacher. But he asks and willingly obtains the intervention of the elders of the city. He had proved to them a kind neighbour and generous benefactor. They are

glad now of an opportunity of reciprocating his offices of regard. Though his presence in their town as an officer of the Roman army was a badge of their political servitude and degradation, yet the law of gratitude and love triumphs over all party jealousies and national animosities. They joyfully undertake the task of mediators, and hasten with his errand to the Saviour's feet. The words of Jesus that morning on the Mount of Beatitudes had scarce died away, when they received, in the case of the centurion, a touching fulfilment, "Love ye your enemies, and do good, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest."

2. *He was a kind Master.* The synagogue-building might have been a piece of Roman ostentation -- the monument which a vain man had erected in a foreign land to perpetuate his name, and secure for himself a brief immortality. It might have been even worse: it might have been erected by the old Roman, on the principle of later Romanists, as the price of a monster "indulgence" -- a sop wherewith to quiet conscience and hush suspicion, in the midst of vice, extortion, and profligacy. But far different was it in his case. The outer deeds of generosity and munificence has an inner echo in goodness of heart and a holy life. We follow him within the sacred threshold of his own homestead. It is all that we could have expected -- in happy conformity with his public character. The love

whose field was the Jewish nation, had its centre and focus in the domestic hearth.

It is indeed, a beautiful and touching picture which is here presented to us: an officer seated by the bedside of his suffering servant, who was racked in torturing pain, “grievously tormented”-- “ready to die.”

Death at all times is a solemn thing Who better able to brave it than was the iron soldier of old Rome, familiar with it, as he was, under its most fearful forms? But it is one thing to face it in the hour of battle -- boldly to die a hero’s death -- and another to watch the slow and stealthy footstep of the grim Destroyer, as he creeps into our loved circles, and threatens to drag endeared inmates down to the blank of everlasting silence. That ghastly enemy confronts him now face to face, and threatens to sweep away “one dear to him” (or, as the word means, “highly valued”). Though that valued one was but *a slave*, occupying a different relation to his Roman master from what the British servant does to a British master, we may well come and sit at the foot of this “good centurion,” and learn lessons of kindness and affection to our inferiors and dependents.

Is there not a solemn reproof and reprimand to many, in the tear that stood in that Soldier’s eye, and the heaving emotions that struggled in his bosom for utterance, as he sat, night by night, at the couch of his slave, and sought by word and deed to alleviate his sufferings? Pure religion,



and undefiled before God, led him to stoop to these offices of lowly love. That blessed Redeemer, at whose feet he was about to cast himself, illustrated, at a subsequent period of His ministry, by a significant act, this duty of condescension and kindness -- He washed His disciples feet. He told them to "go and do likewise;" and His whole gospel breathes the precept, "Condescend to men of low estate."

The centurion of Capernaum cherishes the remembrance of years on years of faithful unremitting servitude; and now he will change places for a time with the helpless sufferer; he will be himself as one that serveth, bending over his anguished pillow in offices of affection and solicitude.

Happy would it be for social life, did Religion, more than it does, thus sanctify and hallow the holy bond uniting servant and Master! The servant working under the lofty Christian motive, "I serve the Lord Christ;" the master knowing and remembering that he has a master also in heaven: the spirit at least remaining of Boaz' salutation to his servants as they reaped in his fields at Bethlehem -- he meeting them with the benediction "The Lord bless you," and they responding, "The Lord bless thee!"

Such, then is a glimpse into the character -- the public and private life -- of the man who now sent the urgent message to the Saviour in behalf of his servant, and who follows up the mission of the elders of the city by himself

leaving the sickbed he was tending, and prostrating himself at the Lord's feet. We wait with anxiety to learn the particulars of this interview.

Let us look, *first, to the centurion's address to the Saviour.*

Two things are very observable in his conduct and words: --

I. Observe his HUMILITY -- "*Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof.*"

What a saying for a proud Roman to a poor Jew! The elders had just, a little before, reached Jesus with the centurion's message, enforcing it with the plea -- "That he was worthy for whom he should do this." But different is the humble Officer's own estimate: he felt that he was a "sinner of the Gentiles" -- an alien from the commonwealth of Israel -- having no heritage in the covenant promises and the temporal blessings therein included.

But he felt more than this. The deep things of God's law had been revealed to his inquiring spirit. He was convinced of the deficiency and defilement of his best obedience and holiest deeds; and with no disguised, or sembled, or counterfeit humility, he bends in lowliest abasement before "*the Holy One.*" A higher wall of separation than the old conventional one between Jew and Gentile, separated between him and Infinite Purity. He had, doubtless, become familiar with the person and

character of the Saviour from His teachings and miracles in and around Capernaum. It may be, in the sumptuous synagogue which his own munificence had reared, have heard of the miraculous Draught of fishes. He must have witnessed the results, at least, of that wondrous Sabbath evening, when disease, which in the morning had flapped its gloomy wings over many a household, at sunset fled by His mighty mandate away. It is more than likely, from his rank and position, that he knew the nobleman whose son, in the same city, had recently experienced the might of Christ's omnipotent word. Would not the same Power that raised a son, raise a Roman bondslave? Was he not approaching One who knew no distinction between Jew and Greek, barbarian, Sythian, bond or free?

It is indeed a lovely impersonation of humility, to see this scion of proud Rome -- a captain in her armies -- one of those accustomed to curl his lip whenever the name of "Jew" was mentioned -- laying aside the pride of name and rank and nation; forgetting that he had stood among the martial legions in the Campus Martius, or sat a guest at Herod's table; accustomed ever to command, seldom to obey; -- rushing now, in the extremity of his unselfish sorrow, to the feet of the homeless Saviour -- the carpenter's son -- the companion of fishermen!

But while "God resisteth the proud," He "giveth grace to the humble." "He that humbleth himself shall be

exalted.” That half-heathen worshipper and suppliant has his brow to this hour wreathed with laurel, which survives in imperishable glory, while the garlands of Roman triumphs and victors have faded into decay, and left no trace behind. He has a monument in the hearts of all loving masters, and faithful servants, and humble-hearted Christians. For “wherever the gospel is preached in all the world,” there shall this, that this Roman officer hath done, be told as a memorial of him.

II. The *second* feature notable (most notable), in the centurion’s conduct, is his FAITH. Whenever there is Humility, there is the concomitant grace of Faith; as a tree strikes its branches upwards in proportion as it strikes its roots downwards, so in proportion as a man is deep in humility, is he “strong in faith, giving glory to God.”

The remarkable feature in this grace of the centurion, and which drew such a tribute regarding it from the lips of Omniscience, was -- that he solicited from Jesus, for he effecting of his servant’s cure, nothing but a *word*. Unlike the nobleman who journeyed to Cana, and besought Jesus to “come down” to Capernaum and heal his son (imagining that the personal presence of the Healer by the sick -couch was indispensable), he requested no more than the mere utterance of the will of Omnipotence. He who of old said, amid brooding chaos, “Let there be light,” had now but to give forth the mandate, ‘Let there be Life,’ and returning

health would mantle the cheeks, and the palsied hands be clasped in grateful thanksgiving.

Observe, too, as an interesting feature in the Soldier's Faith, it took its colour and character from his *Soldier-life* -- "For, " he adds, "*I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me.*" "I am myself a subaltern -- I am accustomed to obey the Tribune, my superior officer and the soldiers of my company, in a similar way, give prompt obedience to my orders. I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.'

The application of the appeal is evident: "If I, in this my worldly calling, have only in the name of Caesar to speak and it is done -- I believe, Lord, it is much more so with *Thee*. Sickness and Disease are Thy appointed messengers; they are servants executing Thy behests; they come and go at Thy command; this palsy now chaining my servant down to his couch, bid it away: -- trouble not Thyself to come and touch him, but even here, in this open street, utter the healing word, and I know the result -- my servant shall be healed."

We may well cease to wonder at Christ denominating this a "*great* faith." Faith deals with the distant, the unseen, the impalpable, the intangible. It has been well defined, "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." We are ever craving for the evidence of

sense and sight; the demand of Thomas is one natural to these earthly hearts of ours, “Except I *see* ....I shall not believe.” But “blessed,” said the Lord, “are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.” We, in this age of the Church, are in the position of that sick servant at Capernaum. To the eye of sense, we are separated from the Saviour. We see him not, -- we can touch him not -- the hand cannot steal amid the crowd to catch His garment hem -- we cannot hear His loved footsteps as of old on our thresholds; but Faith penetrates the invisible; the messenger, -- Prayer, -- meets Him in the streets of the New Jerusalem; and Faith and Prayer together -- the twin delegates from His Church below -- He has never yet sent empty away.

Go, my friends, in the spirit of that Faith to Him; believe in what He has done, and what He is still willing to do. Go and, like the centurion, beseech Him “instantly.” Make the most of fleeting opportunities. Beware of abused responsibilities. Do not wait and linger until you effect some preliminary preparation. “Just as you are,” with no posture but that of humility, and no prayer but the prayer of faith, cast yourself at His feet, saying, “Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief!” And the greater the measure of your faith, the larger and more munificent will be the recompense. Jesus tells the soldier-suppliant that the

answer vouchsafed will be commensurate with the degree of his faith -- “As thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee.”

Having considered the feelings manifested by the Roman centurion in addressing Jesus in behalf of his sick servant, turn we now to the Saviour’s comment on the conduct of this noble-minded soldier, and to those practical lessons with which the subject is replete.

He announces, in connection with this remarkable display of faith, the inbringing of the Gentile nations, “Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.”

This Roman soldier was the earnest-sheaf of a mighty harvest yet to be reaped from heathen lands -- the first fruits of that vast quarter of the globe where Christianity was in after ages to set up its banners and gather its noblest trophies. In the case of the recent miraculous cure on the leper, Jesus “*touched*” him. That leper was a Jew -- a Hebrew by birth; the “touching” him, may be taken as emblematic of the Saviour’s coming into personal contact with those of His own nation, -- “He came to His own, though His own received Him not.” In the case of the present miracle, however, there was no immediate or personal contact with the subject of it. The Saviour spake *the distant word*, and the Roman slave was cured. May not

this have been designed as emblematic of those far off Gentiles and Gentile nations -- millions and millions -- who were never permitted, like Israel, to gaze on the Incarnate God, but who were, in after ages, to experience the power and potency of His miraculous word and will?

*“Many shall come and shall sit down with Abraham!”* Startling utterance this surely to these Galileans; only surpassed by this Jewish Prophet and Teacher turning round and commending openly to the crowd, the faith of a Gentile as surpassing that even of the “peculiar people.” He prefaces it with the word that marks something strange and unwonted, “Verily I say unto you.” Strange, indeed, to Jewish ears it was! That leper, miserable spectacle though he were, was descended from Abraham. He had the accents of the Hebrew tongue hanging on his lips -- he might be able to point, as most Jews were, in the absence of any other heritage, to the sepulchre where lay the ashes of his fathers: but here was a ROMAN -- the synonym of Enmity, Oppression, Profligacy! -- for, along with their conquering standards, they had imported to the shores of that quiet lake the crimes and vices of the capital. Could it be that such wild olive-branches were to be grafted into the native olive? That these Gentile wanderers are to be gathered by the Good Shepherd into one fold? These peoples, so diverse, and for long considered so antagonistic, to be fused into one mass, and that out of this mass there is to arise *the Church*



*of the future?* Yes; and this Roman officer and his slave are selected as the first of these “children of God scattered abroad” who are to sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the new kingdom -- the children of Abraham’s faith, partakers in Abraham’s promise, and finally to be sharers in Abraham’s glorious reward.

There are many important reflections suggested by this memorable incident -- we can only advert to two of these:--

*First*, we are again taught the oft repeated Scripture lesson, that *in every profession and occupation of life, a man may serve God.*

How often are people apt to plead their professions and worldly engagements as an apology for ungodliness! ‘I might have been a Christian,’ say many, ‘but for this adverse position in which I am placed in business. I might have been following a mother’s teachings, and reaping the blessings of a mother’s prayers; but, cast where I am, it is vain to think of a holy walk. I am, by a sad necessity, denied the happiness of a religious life.’

How different it was with this Roman soldier! Not only, soldier as he was, did he fear God; but, it is very observable, he fed and nurtured his faith from *his military habits and experience*. The old discipline and training of a camp-life read to him a high spiritual lesson in approaching Christ -- “For I am a man under authority,” &c.

Ah, it is beautiful when a man thus makes his trade or profession, whatever it be, suggestive of spiritual incentives and motives of action! David, in the most imperishable of poems, made his shepherd-life beautifully to shadow forth his covenant relation to God, beholding in the “green pastures’ and “still waters’ to which he led his flock, a peaceful image of spiritual safety and repose. Listen to the apostle Paul, “the tentmaker,” toiling with his own hands at the goats’ hair canvas that he “might be chargeable to no man:” as he suspends his manual labour to write an epistle to the Church at Corinth, he borrows from his homely occupation encouragement for *their* hearts and his own, with regard to more enduring “tents” -- for we know that when this house of our earthly tent is taken down, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” Or, at a later period, “I am an ambassador in bonds,” said he, as he wrote with the heavy iron fettering his hand; but the chain suggest the glorious contrast, “the word of God is not bound.”

And every profession may become suggestive of such and similar spiritual verities.

Is it the *Husbandman*? He can read in the golden harvest an undying type and pledge of spiritual blessings as the result of faith and earnest diligence in the heavenly husbandry an undying type and pledge of spiritual blessings as the result of faith and earnest diligence in the heavenly

husbandry -- that “in due season we shall reap if we faint not.”

Is it the *Sailor*? Every wave that wafts him nearer the harbour may remind him of the vaster voyage on which he is embarked -- warn him of the treacherous storms, and tell of the glorious security of the heavenly port.

Is it the *Physician*? He is reminded, amid complicated troubles which perplex his experience and baffle his skill, of a Physician who, in a more inveterate trouble, can heal “all diseases.”

Is it the *Merchant*? He is reminded by the very vicissitudes of trade -- the ebbings and flowings in the tide of prosperity -- of the need of securing an interest in a better possession, and more enduring riches than earth can give.

Is it the *Soldier*? He hears mightier bugle-notes sounding to arms, “It is high time to awake out of sleep, for now is your salvation nearer than when you believed!” He is reminded of a more gigantic battle-plain than the world’s conflicting hosts ever occupied -- and the need there is of taking to himself “the whole armour of God,” -- fighting the good fight of faith, and laying hold of eternal life.

It is striking to note that the first Gentile convert welcomed to the new spiritual kingdom, the first Gentile whose prayer was heard and whose slave was healed -- was a European officer; the first of a noble army who have, in

after ages, joined the ranks of the faithful. It is interesting, moreover, to know that he was not the only officer in the pay of Caesar, who, at this era of the world, and in Palestine, was brought to fear God. We have another of similar rank -- the centurion spoken of at the awful terminating scene of Gospel story, who, gazing up on the meek countenance of the Crucified, exclaimed, "Truly this was the Son of God!" We read in a subsequent period of Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, quartered with his men at the seat of government at Caesarea, that he was "a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayer to God alway." We know how the apostle Paul, in his final imprisonment in Rome, melted the iron hearts of Nero's Imperial Guard. The very soldiers between whom the chained prisoner slept, were touched by his sublime patience, his fervid prayers, his unflinching courage, his glorious hopes. And many, since then, have been the brave hearts, unwavering in the hour of duty and death, who have loved to cast their swords and shields at the foot of the Cross, and to glory, far above earthly triumphs, in that of the Roman, "This is the victory which overcometh the world, even our faith."

We have thought of that Roman officer in connection with his Faith, and Kindness, and Humility on *earth*. We

May think of him *at this moment* -- the battle of life long ago ended -- the sword long ago slumbering in its scabbard -- the watchfires of the nightly bivouac quenched for ever -- the trumpet of battle hung mute in the heavenly halls -- seated a fellow-guest with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and the noble array of prophets and patriarchs, apostles and martyrs, in the kingdom of glory -- clothed in white robes, with the palms of a better and nobler victory in their hands!

We may learn as a second lesson, that *Great faith is fostered in the midst of difficulties.*

It would only be to rehearse what we have already said, to show that his pre-eminent faith of the centurion was so reared and nurtured.

The fact of being a Roman by birth -- a Pagan in religion -- a Soldier by profession, formed a three-fold impediment in the path of his spiritual life. But he manfully counted the cost, and not only was victory obtained, but when he laid the spoils at his Lord's feet, that the Saviour declared that Israel had need to blush for *their* faith, when placed side by side with that of the Gentile stranger.

It is of the very nature of faith to grow in the midst of trials and obstacles. The greatest spiritual heroes of the past -- those whose faith culminated highest -- are they who "subdued kingdoms, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched

the violence of fire.” Plunge them into the deep, like the fabled hydra they seem to rise with renovated energy.

Noah’s faith, how wondrous! Battling against the taunts and ridicule of a scoffing world, and standing alone to buffet the storm for one hundred and twenty years.

Abraham’s faith was strongest in his most trying hour, when the son of his prayers -- the child of promise -- was doomed to perish by his own hand.

The faith of the eleven Disciples was never more remarkable than when returning, orphaned and bereaved, from the Mount of Ascension -- all they had most loved vanished from their sight -- left to battle an alien world alone! Yet, we read, “they returned to Jerusalem with great joy!”

Paul’s faith never was stronger or more glorious than when the aged man was fettered in his dungeon, with almost certain death impending. “Nevertheless, I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him.”

And every martyr at the stake, and every missionary in his gigantic task, has to bear the same testimony, that it was when the tempest was highest, and the battle loudest, thy were “strong in faith, giving glory to God.” The oak is rooted firmest and fastest that has been nurtured, not amid quiet climes and in the sheltering valley, but high on the

mountain-side where it has had to wrestle with the storm. That is not vigorous training for the rower, when, resting on his oar, his boat is borne down the descending stream. But his is the hardened sinew and brawny arm whose bark has to face the fiercest current, and struggle with contending wind and tide.

The great man and master-mind was once the boy at school, who bravely encountered difficulty and disadvantage; who wept hot tears over the baffling task, and dried them not till he conquered impediments, gaining mental and moral courage every step in his ascending way. So it is in the higher spiritual struggle. Bunyan's Christian, who scrambled and ran up the "Hill Difficulty," was found asleep on the "Enchanted Ground."

Be not downcast, then, if difficulties and trials surround you in your heavenly life. They may be purposely placed there by God, to train and discipline you for higher developments of faith. If He calls you to "toiling in rowing," it may be to make you the ardier seaman -- to lead you to lift up the hands which hang down and the feeble knees, and to drive you to a holier trust in Him who has the vessel and its destinies in His hand, and who, amid gathering clouds and darkened horizon and crested billows, is ever uttering the mild rebuke to our misgivings -- "Said I not unto thee, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" -- J.R. MACDUFF, D.D.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

OF A GREAT BATTLE FOUGHT WITHOUT WEAPONS OF WAR.

THERE are many cases in history in which multitudes of soldiers have been resisted by a few, or even by a single warrior, and that with success. You recollect how on one occasion strong Samson, when beset by his enemies, killed a thousand men with the first thing he could lay his hands upon -- the jaw bone of an ass. One of David's mighty men lifted up his spear against three hundred, whom He slew at one time. In the history of Greece we read of a king of Sparta, who has become famous for the brave way in which, with three hundred of his own subjects and a small band of other helpers, he kept a pass in the mountains against a prodigious army of the Persians, till getting through by another road, the enemy was about to surround his handful of men. Then, and only then, he rushed forth with his own strong Spartans and a few others, and fell among heaps of slain foes.

No doubt, these and the like were brave deeds. But is it not only in fighting with swords and guns that men have



shown courage, and have stood up a few, or even one, against many. Bravery has been seen in battles for faith in God, and valiant souls have done exploits in contending for truth. Noah was a preacher of righteousness in a very bad time, and may be said to have fought one man against a whole world. The apostles were often led to contend with both numbers and power set against them. You remember Peter before the council, and Paul on Mars' Hill.

Afterwards Paul had to undergo trial at Rome before the emperor, when all "forsook him," and "no man stood by him." Luther, too, the great reformer, was once called before a great assembly of princes, and nobles, and prelates, headed by a mighty monarch, and asked to recant his teaching against popery, when he stood and resolvedly said no, adding words which will be thought on while the world lasts: "I can do no otherwise; so help me, God!" I am now to tell you of another case in which one brave, true man fought on God's side against a multitude.

After he had foretold in Samaria a great dearth in the land, the prophet Elijah went away to a place beside a brook which ran into Jordan, and remained hidden there till the water in the little stream was dried up. How did he get food, you say? Why, God, whom all creatures obey, told some ravens to bring him bread and flesh morning and evening. But when the brook became dry, God said to him, Go to Zarephath, and stay with a widow woman there. So

he journeyed to the place named, and when he came near to it he met a woman who was picking up sticks, and said to her, Would you bring me a little water; and when she was going to fetch it, he called out, And bring me a morsel of bread as well. Then she turned and told him she had only one handful of meal left, and had come out to get a few sticks to make a fire, and cook it with a small drop of oil, which was all she had, for a last meal for her son and herself. And then, she said, we must die. But the prophet answered her. Have no fear: God has sent me to stay with you, and has told me that the meal will not waste, and the oil will not fail, till he shall send rain in the land. So she took him into her house, and he stayed there a long time; and it happened as he said it would. There was always a little meal in the barrel, and a little oil in the cruse, and Elijah and the widow and her son lived on it.

At length, however, God told the prophet to go and meet King Ahab again. He did so, and when they met, Elijah told the king to gather all the people together to Mount Carmel, and to be sure to bring the priests of Baal, and the prophets of his grove. There were four hundred and fifty of these, but Elijah said, Let them all come. A day was fixed, and the people were gathered together, and the king was present, and the prophets and priests of Baal came. So the good prophet of the God of Israel gave them a challenge. He said, You are hundreds, and I am but one.

Let us build two altars -- one for your god, and one for Jehovah whom I serve. Let us put a bullock on each, without any fire below, and let us call on the name of the gods we follow, and see who will answer, and send fire down to burn up the sacrifice. They said, Very well, let us do so; and he answered, Begin ye.

The priests of Baal then went to work and had an altar built; and a bullock was slain and laid upon it, and they began to cry to their idol-god to hear them. But after a long time had past, there was no answer. The sun was now high in the heavens; in fact it was near noon, and as Baal was at first a name given to the sun, I suppose they hoped that when at his height, his hot beams might help them, and they began to cry and shout very loud, O Baal, hear us, O Baal, hear us. It was all in vain. Then they leaped on the altar, and began to cut themselves with knives, thinking their streaming blood would please their god. Poor men! he was no god at all. At this sight Elijah began to mock them, and said, Cry louder, cry louder. Do not doubt that he is a god: but perhaps he is talking with some one, or he is on a journey, or perhaps he is asleep, and you must wake him. Cry louder yet. At last however, everybody saw that all was useless, and it was time for Elijah to have his turn.

The prophet, therefore, said to the people, Come near; and they pressed on closer to where he stood. Now there was an old altar there on which offerings had been made to

Jehovah, though it had fallen into ruins. Elijah repaired it, and then placed a slain bullock on the top of it. To put away all ground for saying he had played a trick in the case, and hidden fire somewhere about the altar, he next told the people to pour buckets of water over the whole, once, twice, and a third time, till the ditch round the altar was filled with it, and everything was drenched. Then he knelt down and prayed to God to be pleased to show, that day, that he was God in Israel. These were the words of his prayer: "Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word: Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again." God did hear him, and that at once. For immediately fire came down from heaven, and burnt up the wood and the sacrifice on the altar -- but not only that, but the stones and the earth of the altar, and licked up quite dry all the water round about it. It must have been a wonderful sight to see that flash of fire coming at the prophets prayers, and burning everything up. No wonder the people fell on their faces in awe and trembling. When they had recovered themselves a little, then the cry went up, Jehovah, he is the God; Jehovah, he is the God.

After this, Elijah had a stern work to do. The priests that had led the people astray were to be punished. They

had wickedly turned God's own chosen nation to serve idols. So the prophet told those that were present and who had been so strangely but fully taught their sin to take the false teachers and slay them on the spot. It was done as he ordered. The people took them to the brook Kishon, and killed them beside the stream. They had caused its waters to be greatly dried by provoking God to send a long drought, and now their blood flows in its channel. It was a severe, but a righteous judgment, on men who had misled a people into rebellion against their God and king.

One more thing Elijah had to do that day. He must pray for rain. The time of mercy has come back. So he went away up the mountain side, till he came to a convenient spot, and then he sat down on the ground, and bent his head down, till it rested on his hands between his knees. He was praying for rain. While he did this he sent his servant up to the top of the hill, to look out over the sea and watch for the coming of the rain. But he had to go up seven times before he could report anything. The seventh time the young man came down and said there is a cloud like a man's hand coming up from the sea. At that word the prophet knew that the rain was at hand. So he sent word to the king. In the meantime all the sky became black, and the winds rose, and floods of water fell. The last thing I have to tell in this story is curious. What do you think Elijah now did? When the king's coach was ready, he drew his

girdle tight about him, and ran before the horses all the way to the gate of the city where the king was to stay. Happy king! if he had chosen to have the prophet always going before him to point the way.

-----

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Can you find a promise that a few shall be able to conquer many?
2. What was the name of David's mighty follower who slew three hundred foes at once?
3. What other instances can you give of God's power over birds, beasts, and fishes?
4. Were there many widows during the famine that Elijah was not sent to relieve?
5. What other instances have we of a little bread sufficing to furnish a great many meals?
6. Do you recollect another example of the powerlessness of an idol in the presence of the living God?
7. Can you find a command against useless repetitions like those of the priests of Baal in prayer to God?
8. Can you think of another sacrifice which, probably, God accepted by answering with fire?
9. What other prophet had a work of judgment to do in killing one whom God had sentenced to death?

10. Who else, before and after Elijah, prayed to God, not seated, but stretched on the ground?

ANSWERS to the foregoing questions will be found by consulting Josh. xxiii.; 1 Chron. xi.; Gen. vii.; 1 Kings xvii.; Luke iv.; 2 Kings iv.; Matt. xv.; John vi.; 1 Sam. v.; Matt. vi.; Gen. iv. compared with Ps. xx., margin; 1 Sam. xv.; Josh. vii.; 2 Sam. xii.; Mark xiv.

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE LESSONS.

1. May God's children continue in sin that his grace may more abundantly appear in their salvation? Rom. vi. 2.

2. Did the death of Christ, as a sacrifice for sin, need to be repeated? Rom. vi. 10; Heb. ix. 26.

3. Does Christ's having died unto sin once, secure that sin shall not have dominion over his people? Rom. vi. 14.

4. Should likeness to Christ, in the spotless righteousness of his character, be the unceasing aim of all who believe in him? Rom. vii. 4; Col. iii. 1-5.

-----

### *Prayer.*

O LORD God, the living and the true God, the only God, what praise shall we give Thee that Thou hast not left us to

worship gods of our own fancy, or idols that our hands have made. We thank Thee that we have been taught that our Maker and Father cannot be lower than we his own children are, and cannot be like unto gold or silver. We pray that we may have that eternal life which is in knowing Thee to be the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent. May we be kept from forsaking Thee for any idol of the heart. O God, have pity upon the nations that are still in the darkness of idolatry, and hasten the time when, taught to know thee in Thy Son Christ Jesus, they also shall say, The Lord, he is the God. This we ask for Jesus' sake. *Amen.*

-----

## EVENING WORSHIP.

O GOD, draw Thou near to us at this time. Vouchsafe us Thy blessing and the aids of Thy Holy Spirit. Gather in our wandering thoughts. Enable us to fix them on Thee, and to read and hear thy word as for eternity, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



HYMN, *or Psalm* lxxxv. 6-12.

OUR God, how firm his promise stands  
Even when He hides his face!  
He trusts in our Redeemer's hands  
His glory and his grace.

Then whence our fears and sad complaints,  
Since Christ and we are one?  
Our God is faithful to his saints,  
Is faithful to his Son.

Beneath his smiles our hearts have lived,  
And part of heaven possess'd;  
We praise his name for grace received,  
And trust Him for the rest.

ROMANS VI. 1-14.

WHAT shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? 2. God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? 3. Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 4. Therefore we are buried with him by

baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: 6. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. 7. For he that is dead is freed from sin. 8. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: 9.

Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. 10. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. 11. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. 12. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. 13.

Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. 14. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

## ROMANS VII. 1-4.

**K**NOW ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? 2. For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. 3. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress, though she be married to another man. 4. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

-----

### *Prayer.*

**O**UR Father who art in heaven, we desire, on this the close of Thy holy day, reverently to worship at thy footstool. We bless Thee for all the loving-kindness Thou hast made to pass before us; -- for all the tokens of Thy mercy we have been permitted to enjoy. Giver of all grace! draw Thou

near to us: enable us to end this Sabbath with Thee, and to retire to rest in the conscious possession of Thy friendship. Forgive all the sins of the past day, -- the sins of our sacred services, -- our sins of omission and commission, of thought, word, and deed, -- whatever has been inconsistent with Thy pure and holy will. May the holy leaven of the Sabbath be made manifest throughout the week; pervading and sanctifying all its duties. Look not on us, Lord, as we are in ourselves. But behold our Shield, look upon the face of Thine Anointed. We are complete in him. Thousands of needy suppliants have repaired to His cross: and this is still His name and memorial, "Mighty to save." May we be enabled to cleave to Him as our only Saviour. May we testify the reality of our faith and the depth of our gratitude by bringing forth all the peaceable fruit of righteousness. May we walk more closely, and humbly, and habitually with Thee our God. May every blessing we have be hallowed and consecrated to us, by connecting it, with Thyself, the great Bestower. May we submit to every cross as the appointment of Thine infinite wisdom. Transform us from day to day, and from week to week, more into the image of thy dear Son. May we love what He loves, and hate what he hates. Keep us from inactivity and sloth. Let our loins be girded and our lamps burning. May we bear about with us the lofty impress of those who are born *from* above and *for* above; and who declare plainly that they seek a better

country. Thy Spirit, O God, is good, lead us unto the land of uprightness.

Bless our beloved friends wherever they are; enrol their names in the Lamb's book of life. Bless every member of this family now surrounding Thy footstool; give them the heritage of those that fear Thee; number them with Thy saints in glory everlasting.

Draw near in great mercy unto all who are in sorrow -- to all who are mourning the loss of beloved relatives. Give them everlasting consolation and good hope through grace. Let them see no hand in their trials but Thine; saying in devout submission, "Father, not our will, but Thine, be done!"

We pray for Thy cause and kingdom everywhere. Darkness is still covering the lands, and gross darkness the people. Arise, Lord, and plead Thine own cause. May the time, to favour Zion, yea, the set time speedily come. Revive Thy work in the midst of the years. In wrath do Thou remember mercy. Direct all the hearts of Thy true people into Thy love, and into the patient waiting for Christ.

Watch Thou over us during the unconscious hours of sleep. May no evil befall us, and no plague come nigh our dwelling. If pleased to spare us to see the light of another day, may we rise fitted and prepared for all its duties. And all that we ask, or hope for, is in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ, our only Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

#### *Morning.*

**Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon the Lord.**

They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course.

Hear, O heavens; and give ear, O earth: for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.

The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.

Ps. xiv. 4.

Ps. lxxxii. 5.

Isa. i. 2, 3.

#### *Evening.*

**The Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in our land.**

For my people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge.

O Lord, are not thine eyes upon the truth? thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction: they have made their faces harder than a rock; they have refused to return.

Therefore I said, Surely these are poor; they are foolish: for they know not the way of the Lord, nor the judgment of their God.

For thus hath the Lord said, The whole land shall be desolate; yet will I not make a full end.

Hos. iv. 1.      Jer. iv. 22.      Jer. v. 3, 4.      Jer. iv. 27.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.**

Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen; that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he.

And Jesus answering, saith unto them, Have faith in God.

For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.

But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

2 Chron xx. 20. Isa xliii. 10. Mark xi. 22, 23. Heb. xi. 6.

*Evening.*

**Teach me good judgment and knowledge: for I have believed thy commandments.**

Let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God.

Then said they unto him, what shall we do, that we might work the works of God?

Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you: walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.



While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light.

Ps. cxix. 66. Heb. vi. 1. John vi. 28, 29. John xii. 35, 36.

## WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another.**

And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and him in him: and hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God, and everyone that loveth is born of God.

1 John iii. 23, 24. 1 John iv. 6, 7.

*Evening.*

**Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.**

In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

John xiv. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**Be not faithless, but believing.**

Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

Who is a liar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.

Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father.

And now, little children, abide in him; that when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.

John xx. 27.      Matt. x. 32, 33.      1 John ii. 22, 23, 28.

*Evening.*

**Dost thou believe on the Son of God?**

He answered and said, Who is the Lord, that I might believe on him?

And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee.

And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.

And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world; that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind.

For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

John ix. 35, 36, 37, 38, 39. Rom. x. 11.

## FRIDAY.

### *Morning.*

**Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.**

If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him:

If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:

If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself.

Rom. vi. 8.

Rom. x. 9, 10.

2 Tim. ii. 11, 12, 13.

### *Evening.*

**Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.**

Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

And let us consider one another, to provoke unto love, and to good works:

For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

Heb. x. 22, 23, 24, 26, 27.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**For we walk by faith, not by sight.**

While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

Of how much sorer judgment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

2 Cor. v. 7.      2 Cor. iv. 18.      Heb. x. 28, 29.

*Evening.*

**That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that  
ye, being rooted and grounded in love,**

May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the  
breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

And to know the love of Christ, which passeth  
knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of  
God.

Now unto him that is able to do exceedingly abundantly  
above all that we ask or think, according to the power that  
worketh in us,

Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus  
throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

Eph. iii. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21.

# Home Preacher, or Church in the House.

## Twentieth Week.

### Morning Worship.

OUR heavenly Father, who didst not spare Thine own Son, but didst give Him up for us all, and with Him freely givest us all things; grant us at this time, we beseech Thee, the illumination of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may find Thee in Thy word, worthily worship Thee by our service, and by faith embrace Jesus Christ our only Lord and Saviour.  
*Amen.*

### HYMN, *or Psalm* cxviii. 24-29.

THIS is the day the Lord hath made,  
He calls the hours his own;  
Let heaven rejoice, let earth be glad,  
And praise surround the throne.

To-day he rose and left the dead  
And Satan's empire fell;  
To-day the saints his triumphs spread,  
And all his wonders tell.

Hosanna to the anointed King,  
To David's holy Son!  
Help us, O Lord! descend and bring  
Salvation from Thy throne.

Blest be the Lord who comes to men  
With messages of grace  
Who comes, in God his Father's name.  
To save our sinful race.

Hosanna in the highest strains,  
The church on earth can raise;  
The highest heavens, in which he reigns,  
Shall give him nobler praise.

## PSALM LI.

HAVE mercy upon me, O God, according to thy  
lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender



mercies blot out my transgressions. 2. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. 3. For I acknowledge my transgression: and my sin is ever before me. 4. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest. 5. Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. 6. Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom. 7. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean, wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. 8. Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. 9. Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. 10. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. 11. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free Spirit. 13. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee. 14. Deliver me from blood guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness. 15. O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise. 16. For thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it; thou delightest not in burnt offering. 17. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. 18. Do good in thy good pleasure unto

Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem. 19. Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

## PSALM XXXII.

BLESSED is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. 2. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile. 3. When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all day long: 4. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. 5. I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. 6. For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him. 7. Thou art my hiding-place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. 8. I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye. 9. Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no

understanding; whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee. 10. Many sorrows shall be to the wicked but he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about. 11. Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.

-----

*Prayer.*

ALMIGHTY and most merciful God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and our Father, we give Thee our most hearty thanks for all Thy love and goodness; and we praise Thee and worship Thee the Father everlasting. Though thou dwellest in the light that is inaccessible and full of glory, we know Thou carest for us, and that thy thoughts are to us-ward. We know Thy holiness and Thy power and Thy goodness, and that to Thee all angels cry aloud, the heavens and all the powers therein; but we know Thee through Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent, and that Thou art not far from any one of us, but like as a father Thou dost pity us, and knowest our frame, and rememberest that we are dust. We beseech Thee, who dwellest in the heaven of heavens, to hear us when we pray.

We thank Thee for this day of Thine, its peace, worship, and blessings; and that there is now, and remaineth, a rest for the people of God. May we rest from our sins in Thy forgiveness, from our works to do Thine, from our weariness and care in Thy love, and may the peace which passeth all understanding keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. We thank Thee for Thy word and sacraments, and that Thou dost not only give us our daily bread, but the living bread of heaven for our souls. Grant that Thy word may abide in our hearts, that thereby we, Thine unworthy servants, may be comforted, edified, and built up in our most holy faith. We thank Thee for the church on earth, for all pastors and teachers, for the communion of saints, and for the presence of Jesus. Mercifully grant us to abide in the Lord, rooted and grounded in love, and abounding in charity to the whole body of Christ; and that the word preached may profit, being mixed with faith in them that hear it. We thank thee for the light that shineth in our darkness, for the life Thou hast quickened in our death, for the joy that gladdens us in sorrow, for the means of grace and for the hope of glory. We thank Thee for the care of our bodies, for our food and raiment, for health and happiness, for our home and our friends, for relief in sickness, and succour in adversity, and for all the blessings of this life. We thank Thee above all for Thy dear Son, that Thou didst not spare him, but didst

freely give Him up for us, that He is the propitiation for our sins, and for the sins of the whole world, and that He ever liveth to make intercession for us.

We beseech Thee O Father, for His sake who is our merciful and patient Saviour, that Thou wilt forgive us our wrong-doing and wrong-thinking, our negligence and ignorance, and all our faults. If Thou wert only strict to mark iniquity, we could not come before Thee; for our iniquities are countless and grievous, and Thou abhorrest and punishest sin, and we know Thou art just. We come to Thee for pardon. Have mercy upon us, O God, according to the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out our transgressions. Remember not the sins of our youth; according to Thy mercy remember Thou us, for Thy goodness' sake, O Lord. Wash us thoroughly from our iniquity, and cleanse us from our sin. Help us to believe in the great sacrifice of Christ our passover, and that we have redemption through his blood. Help us to conceive Thy holiness. May Thy grace strengthen us against temptation and an evil heart of unbelief; may we fight down the world, the flesh, and the devil; may we be full of faith and the Holy Ghost. Keep us in communion with Thee, that by the Spirit of adoption we may receive witness we are Thy children, that we may approach Thee with open hearts, and trust Thee and love Thee as our Father.

We carry Thy treasure in earthen vessels, O Lord; sanctify us, and preserve it from the soil of sin. We are weak and helpless, and our trials and infirmities are many: we look with all confidence to Thee that it may please Thee to give us the victory over ourselves. Support us here by Thy grace, and hereafter reveal to us Thy glory. Send us Thy light and Thy truth, that they may guide us to Thy holy hill.

We pray for the good estate of Thy church, that it may please Thee daily to call into it such as shall be saved; to preserve it from false doctrine, heresy, and schism; to lead back to Thee those that have erred or are deceived, and to grant that all Christians may live in unity, peace, and concord. We pray that Thy will may be done in earth, as it is in heaven, that the gospel may be preached unto all nations, that the ends of the earth may see the salvation of our God, that it may please Thee to further all good, and to make Thy people fruitful in works of faith and labours of love.

We pray Thee, whose throne is above all thrones, that thou wilt preserve to us righteous and Christian government, and wilt grant peace in our day; that as Thou wast with our fathers, Thou wilt be with us, and wilt bless our country with pure religion, wise administration, and prosperous commerce. Bless, O Lord, the Queen, that she may be crowned with Thy favour, supported by Thy grace,

and trust in the King of kings and Lord of lords. And grant, O most merciful Father, that we may live in Thy fear, die in Thy peace, be raised at the last day by Thy power, and may thereafter inherit Thy kingdom, where, with the angels and Thy holy elect, we shall worship and magnify Thee through all eternity in the name of Thy dear Son, Jesus Christ, our Saviour. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who hast called us to be Thy children, and to walk in the footsteps of Thy dear Son, our Saviour; grant us child-like, faithful, and obedient hearts, that we may truly follow Him, and may walk before Thee in love, and in the communion of the Holy Ghost, who, with Thee and our Lord Jesus Christ, ever abideth one God, unto whom be glory for ever. Our Father, who art in Heaven, &c.

HYMN, *or Psalm* cxvi. 1-7.

WHEN along life's thorny road  
Faints the soul beneath its load,  
By its care and sin opprest,  
Finds on earth no peace or rest;  
When the wily tempter's near,  
Filling us with doubt and fear;  
Jesus, to thy feet we flee,  
Jesus, we will look to Thee.

Thou, our Saviour, from thy throne  
Listenest to thy people's moan,  
Thou, the living Head, dost share  
Every pang thy members bear:  
Full of tenderness Thou art,  
Thou wilt heal the broken heart;  
Full of power, thine arm shall quell  
All the rage and might of hell.

By thy tears o'er Lazarus shed,  
By thy power to raise the dead  
By thy meekness under scorn,  
By thy stripes and crown of thorns,



By that rich and precious blood,  
That hath made our peace with God,  
Jesus, to thy feet we flee,  
Jesus, we will cling to Thee.

Mighty to redeem and save,  
Thou hast overcome the grave;  
Thou the bars of death hast riven,  
Opened wide the gates of heaven.  
Soon in glory Thou shalt come  
Taking thy poor pilgrims home;  
Jesus then we all shall be,  
Ever, ever, Lord, with Thee.

## GENESIS XVIII.

AND the Lord appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent-door in the heat of the day; 2. And he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and, when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent-door, and bowed himself toward the ground, 3. And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant. 4. Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest

yourselves under the tree: 5. And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do as thou hast said. 6. And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth. 7. And Abraham ran unto the heard, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it. 8. And he took butter and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat. 9. And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent. 10. And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent-door, which was behind him. 11. Now Abraham and Sarah were old, and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. 12. Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also? And the Lord said unto Abraham, wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old? 14. Is any thing too hard for the Lord? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son. 15. Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not: for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; but thou didst laugh. 16. And the

men rose up from thence and looked toward Sodom: and Abraham went with them, to bring them on the way. 17. And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; 18. Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? 19. For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him. 20. And the Lord said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous, 21. I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know. 22. And the men turned their faces toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the Lord. 23. And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? 24. Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein? 25. That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? 26. And the Lord said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes. 27. And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken

upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes; 28. Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for lack of five? And he said, If I find forty and five I will not destroy it. 29. And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do it for forty's sake. 30. And he said unto him, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do it if I find thirty there. 31. And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for twenty's sake. 32. And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake. 33. And the Lord went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned to his place.

#### PHILIPPIANS IV. 1-13.

**T**HEREFORE, my brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved. 2. I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord. 3. And I entreat thee

also, true yoke-fellow, help those women that laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow-labourers, whose names are in the book of life. 4. Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice. 5. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing: but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. 7. And the peace which passeth understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. 8. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise think on these things. 9. Those things, which ye have both learned and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you. 10. But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, and now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity. 11. Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. 12. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where, and in all things, I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. 13. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

-----

## SERMON XX.

“AND HE WENT ON HIS JOURNEYS FROM THE  
SOUTH EVEN TO BETH-EL, UNTO THE PLACE  
WHERE HIS TENT HAD BEEN AT THE  
BEGINNING, BETWEEN BETH-EL AND HAI;  
UNTO THE PLACE OF THE ALTAR, WHICH HE  
HAD MADE THERE AT THE FIRST: AND THERE  
ABRAM CALLED ON THE NAME OF THE LORD.”  
— Gen. xiii. 3, 4.

IN the early chapters of the story of Abraham we read of him wandering from pasture to pasture, living a roving shepherd's life, guided only by fresher herbage or a wider range. It was an unsettled, desultory existence, just of the kind to tempt a man into vacant, desultory thought. Sitting in his tent and watching the lazy browsing of the herds, the languor of the warm air stealing in upon him, and round him the silence and repose of an oriental landscape; one day like another, and the careless foot of a wanderer straying through each — there was a great danger that life would become an idle monotony of change, without purpose, seriousness, or connection. It is in those very chapters that we are struck by the repetition of a simple phrase, Abraham

builded an altar, called upon the name of the Lord. On the plain of Moreh, on the hillside between Beth-el and Hai, at Mamre and Beersheba, there was the sacrifice and the prayer. No link of life might bind him to the spot, there could be no great variety of incident to mark his sojourn, the growth of the young grass would hide all trace of his encampment: but the altars remained; he found them standing years after they were built; they linked his wanderings together; and they told him that God's eye was upon him, clear and unchanging; that his presence was with him, that he was there by God's calling, that this vague roving life had a very distinct and sacred meaning. And long after, when the stones had been pushed out of their places by the wind, and lay soiled and weather-beaten in the rank weeds, they declared to other generations that Abraham felt the land was God's — His whom Melchizedek confessed as the possessor of heaven and earth.

To us also they speak, revealing the secret of Abraham's inner life, its strength and consecration. Where the flock halted, his worship began. It was at the altar he knelt down, and opened his heart to God. The common picture of him left upon our minds is of a calm and gentle serenity. Reading of him as he grew rich in cattle and silver and gold, sat in his tent door, or came out by night to gaze upon the stars, we recall such notions as we have of shepherd life, and blend them all together with the natural

repose of age. Yet Abraham's life was rugged, harsh, and painful; his character was full of fire, energy, and passion. When the restlessness and buoyancy of youth were over, when he was old enough to feel not only the pain and isolation of removal, but reluctance, God called him from his home to a strange country. He became the pilgrim that God meant him to be, wandered up and down among the foreign Canaanites, was driven as far as Egypt by famine, parted by a servants' quarrel from the only kinsman that had followed him, twice cruelly separated from his wife, tried by jealousies and strife in his house, forced to cast one of his sons with his mother out upon the desert, on the point of slaying the other with his own hand, and obliged at last to beg for a grave among strangers. Trials fell thick upon him, and not as they might fall upon dull, passionless natures. His rapid impetuous march upon Lot's captors, the passionate tenderness of his love for Sarai, the ardour of his hospitality at Mamre, even when stricken in years, flash through the evenness of every day the clearest light into his character. Sensitive, eager, high-spirited, he was exposed to that keenness of trial that blunter tempers may escape. It would descend on him with crushing blows; it would wound, perplex and humble him. And if we are to account for the dominant impression of calm with which we rise from the reading of his life, is it not by the altar where he called upon the name of the Lord? Is it not that it was there



he brought the occupations and the little incidents of life, his cares and annoyances, his impatience and rebelliousness? Was it not there that his temper lost its sharpness, and trouble ceased to vex him; that he won rest, and grace, and holier faith, and the peace that brooded over his later days?

The hint that these words throw out, the solution that they offer, is one of wide and daily interest. Most lives may seem to run in worn and common grooves, yet what is common is trouble, disappointment and care. Most days may seem so like that they blend into a hazy memory, yet it is the likeness of duty done and not done, of circumstances each of which is fashioning the conduct, thoughts that are pure or impure, temptations weak or strong. To each of us this daily life is a matter of supreme importance. To each of us it is our own, of no great account possibly in the sum of lives, “common as the commonplace,” but concerning us more nearly than aught else in the world, with issues of immortality and eternity hung upon it. How it may be beautified, purified, and consecrated, how the burden and pain of it may best be borne, how its bitter may become sweet and its rough places plain, how it may win the strength, dignity, and repose of Abraham’s are questions we must often ask, to which this calling upon the name of the Lord returns an intelligible answer. What we learn here

seems to be, The influence of daily prayer on daily life; and to understand that, we must consider —

I. *The Character of Abraham's Prayer.* — There is but one prayer of Abraham on record. While the sky over Sodom and Gomorrhas was already charged with the fires that destroyed them, he begged the Judge of all the earth to forbear. The narrative is one of the most tragically vivid in the Bible, and the tragedy is woven with miracle, cut off, it might seem, from the sphere of everyday. The prayer rises to a height as lofty as the occasion: an unparalleled sublimity. And yet at his altar Abraham must have prayed in the same spirit, out of the same heart to God, as on the brow of the hills of Hebron. If this one prayer rise higher, we may believe it only shows the characteristics of all his prayers in bolder relief: —

1. *Frankness*, for example. With an open heart, like the man who was the “Friend of God.” Abraham told out his thoughts. He was puzzled. God was the righteous one: justice and judgment were the habitation of his throne. But right and wrong get sadly mixed in the world. Upright men would sometimes be unjust, and the truest men be false. And from this confusion he could look up to the heavens and feel that there was an infinite Justice there. It was the one clear fixed point. Unclouded by human passions, untouched by prejudice and infirmity, unmoved by

praise and blame, unerring and unalterable, God dwells apart in his own high heaven. But would He destroy the innocent with the guilty? Must righteous Lot suffer for the filthy conversation of the wicked? He was perplexed with new and troubled thoughts; and he bore them frankly to God. He might have pressed them back. Did they not seem to cast a slur upon God's providence? was it not presumptuous to measure and weigh God's ways? was he not afraid to hint that there was such a difficulty in his soul? There are hundreds who reason in that spirit: for there are times when we do question God's ways very earnestly and bitterly, grappling with the mysteries of his dealings, and striving to deny the justice of his judgments; times when the heart is quivering to some fine torture, and we look up for clue to it in vain. The hasty, rebel thought is thrust down with the whole force of our reverence for God, and our terror of sin. And yet it will come up again. The unsatisfied murmuring spirit remains; and the wound is only hidden, not healed. We meet with a thousand perplexities: dealings of God in the world that seem to deny his justice; strokes of pain that seem to deny his mercy; cries for help that seem to strike against a heaven of brass; a tolerance and honour and security of evil that seem to conflict with his hatred of sin; good men perishing before their prime; some single voice upheld for truth, and drowned at last in the clamour of the wrong. Shall we press them back upon

our hearts, to remain a burden and a snare and an engine of temptation? Shall we not lift them up before God as a weight too heavy for his children to carry? Let these thoughts and murmurings be put down, but let God put them down. Does He not know our frame, and remember that we are dust? To whom may we bring our puzzles if not to Him? Frankly, honestly, let us bring them, if not for light, yet for strength and faith to bear them a little longer.

2. *Confidence* is another mark of Abraham's prayers: it comes out in each thought, in the shaping of every petition. He is confident that God will do right. Whatever may seem to contradict that can make no real change. He rests on what he knows to be true: bewilderment and doubt could only drive him to take refuge there. He is confident God will be merciful. He is as sure of it as that He must be just. Neither the notorious wickedness of Sodom, nor the announcement of judgment shake him in that conviction. He is confident that God will hear him. It is by this thought that the prayer rises to its height. The hoariest sinners in Canaan were to be smitten--men that had sunk to be as low as their own beasts. Sentence was to be executed speedily--the very next day. He that talked with Abraham had declared that this judgement was his own work; that He was about to fulfil it; that He was the Judge of all the earth. Little room, one might say, for pleading there. Yet Abraham pleads as if there was no discouragement, with a

firm, unwavering petition--a request that is sublime in its apparent hopelessness, its absolute trust. We have all that right of prayer; the knowledge that He heareth us; that we may go to Him when we will. Our prayer is not a formal didactic lesson, to be said only when it can be well said; we may be able to plead no precedent for it: if we can only rest it on the ground of what God is, let us pray it with all our might. Are we satisfied that God is just, let us pray Him by his justice; that He is our Father, let us pray Him by his love; that He has redeemed us, let us pray Him by his Son; that He cares for all his creatures, let us pray Him by his goodness; nay, if we feel no more than the awfulness and mystery of his Being, let us pray Him even by that to reveal Himself that we may know Him.

3. There is another feature of Abraham's prayer that is preserved with the happiest fidelity--its *childlikeness*. No one would care to miss that singular *naivete* with which he reduces the numbers by five to as low a point as he may venture. His simple credence, his ease in the midst of supernatural wonders, his intense realism, his fearlessness, belong to the spirit of the child. No doubt he is a man of a great and childlike heart; and such are our greatest men, whose hearts keep fresh when lesser men's have withered into worliness. But a child's heart is the gift God offers with his Spirit, which any Christian may claim and hope for, with which, in its completeness, the saint shall be finally

endowed; for the vision of heaven is the clearest sight into our Father's heart. To Him we should come as his children, as we would have our children come to us. Through files of guards, and courtly vesture, and the symbols of a king, the king's little son will press to his father upon the very throne. Through angel files and pomp of of heaven, up to the light that is full of glory and the throne that is above every throne, we may press to our God. Notice the child's easy ways without embarrassment, his instincts of love, his wondering but reverent eyes, his faith that solves all later puzzles, his light step through the same life where men move slowly, weighing of its mysteries: and gather from them the secret and very heart of prayer. You, too, are a child: by no means easy to remember. For there is your wider knowledge of the forces of nature and the principles of life, of the cunning and wisdom stored up in the world, the order evolved out of confusion, vastness of conception and elaborate detail; and as this knowledge grows, so does God seem to remove from sphere to sphere into far off and ever deepening awe. And there is your power of estimating moral qualities and measuring their worth, sifting men's conduct for them, placing them one by one and noting their relative brilliance, marking what hinders or detracts from them, and how much the real falls short of the ideal; and with this larger power there grows up unconsciously a larger reverence for the perfect attributes of God, a feeling

of his awful and unapproachable grandeur, of a justice, righteousness, firmness, a purity, love, and truth, that are dazzling and bewildering--a revelation of His glory that seems to surround Him with inaccessible light. And there is that consciousness and knowledge of sin that comes of longer contact with men, of its soil upon your heart and its curse upon life, the darkness and dismal doom of it; while the holiness of God builds itself up before you, like some peak of snow, into infinite distance of blue. To recognize all these thoughts, yet feel towards God as our Father, is not the same as to come to Him in the freshness and singleness of childhood. But let that thought of his Fatherhood be displaced, and let us, though it be in reverence, conceive God only by his majesty, and we drop the comfort and serenity of prayer, if not the very key to it. His Fatherhood, our Childhood, are the noblest part of the reconciliation effected by his Son. To hold them may cost us a struggle, but it must be one of the victories of our faith. We are his children if we believe in the death of Jesus Christ for us. We are to worship Him, speak to Him, think of Him as our Father. It is not a dream, nor a hope for the future, nor a privilege of rare souls. Here on earth, joyful or sorrowful; as near our conversion as the jailer at Philippi when he believed; as far past it as Paul when he said, "I am ready to depart"--we can look up through veil after veil of

splendours, and pray, saying, *Our Father, who art in heaven.*

There are no doubt other characteristics of Abraham's prayer than these, some common to all prayer, some peculiar to this--faith, directness, earnestness, importunity. But these three are the most notable and pertinent. They help us to understand how Abraham prayed at his altar--how we should pray at ours. They help to explain the great change that was wrought in his character, temper, and life; to make us realize—

II. *The Influence of Prayer upon Daily Life.*--The tendency of culture and of a high civilization is to multiply our wants and pleasures. Society becomes more and more complex, its machinery more intricate and delicate. We require to take more into account: there seem to be more force at work; their direction and power are modified by more varied conditions. And, with this change, the old simplicity wears out of life. It is inevitable. We cannot stay this growth of knowledge and skill by which the world advances to higher destinies.

Even were this not so, life would often be a puzzle to us — a tangle of broken threads. Our most matured plans will fall into confusion. So easy an accident may defeat our wisdom, may befall us from so many quarters, that we cannot absolutely guard against it. Yet it may completely derange our calculations, and to bring back some order may



be a tedious and discouraging task. Every year, and almost every day, has its embarrassments, when we pause perplexed about the next step. Every act in the past is connected with indefinite consequences in the future. Our duty may not be always plain; it may need more than a sensitive conscience and a clear head to determine it. When it is plain, it may involve us so seriously that our anxiety to do it is less than our anxiety when it is done. Moreover, there are knotty questions that we find unexpectedly, questions of casuistry in morals, apparent contradictions between physical and theological science, problems about the relations of good and evil in this world, and these lay on many minds a greater burden than weightier and more personal cares. In such puzzle and embarrassment of life it is easy to conceive the influence of prayer. For this business that you cannot unravel you give over to God and his wisdom and love for you, and there is no tangle nor perplexity to Him. Most of us know the relief of carrying our confusion to some friend of clear judgment and experience, and even if he could give us no immediate clue, how lightened we felt to know that he sought for it, and kept our position before him. We have felt as if already we might dismiss much of our uneasiness, and by that very feeling we have been so helped that we could see our own way through. We have relief in the best form by prayer, by counsel with the Counsellor, laying our position before Him,

begging his help. He has never refused it to His people: as a Father He will not. When He has taken up the tangled threads, we may be sure of finding the lost clue. And if we trust Him for direction beforehand, and let our plans and all our conduct originate in prayer, we have greater gain: for steps that it would have cost us infinite pains to venture, and that after pains we might have taken in darkness and misgivings, we now take with the fearless faith and readiness of a child. Thus referring everything to God, the most involved life may become simple.

And as life gains in simplicity, it gains in power. Time and thought are not spent in searching passages that lead to nothing. With plainer landmarks of right and wrong, the habit of waiting to be guided by an unerring hand, and a readier and bolder decision, we are better able to work and have more leisure. A stream may waste its strength over its own rough bed with roar and foam, and chafe against the walls of rock that fling its eddies back; but, led by the wit and hand of man into another channel, it will not only flow smoothly past its ancient barriers, but find force to turn the dry mill-wheel. And instead of much noise and many rash and hasty words, our life through prayer will flow quietly, and spend its force in labours of charity and love: for we want time to think of others, and spread the holy kingdom; and instead of being tied by our perplexities, our hands should be free for working with God. And this life will be

the simplest, and the happiest, and the life of faith, and faith is fed through prayer.

2. *It will calm our daily life.* — Abraham's calm is beautiful and soothing; sometimes rising to a noble dignity. It is beautiful in his straits between Sarah, Ishmael, and Hagar: solemn and stately in his journey up to Mount Moriah. We can imagine with what pains he reached it; how much this self-command had cost him; how he must have fought against himself till the battle was won. Nor is it self-command only, but a deep serenity, of which, surely, most of us have felt the need. Many a good deed has been spoilt by haste; many a good advice by irritation; many a wordy arrow has pierced through our impatience that would have glanced off our calm. We have been sufferers, and others have not been gainers. We may have wished that some angel, seated at the springs of life, could touch our thoughts and temper with his wand. Now God has provided for this wish by prayer. Those who kneel at the altar, before the infinite calm of God, pass to their work with a calmer mind. Our communion with his peace leaves peace with us. What has vexed and fretted us, the petty cares and troubles of the day, the hurt feelings, the fancied slights, sink into their true littleness, beside this holy everlasting alm. On a mountain summit, in the hush of autumn woods, or when the dawn reveals the silent spotless sky and the silent dewy earth, the natural calm may have

stolen into our minds. But these are rare moments, not in the common track of life; and that calm is little better than a yearning for it. It does not help us through the day it probably makes us dissatisfied that the day is so unlike it; it imparts no strength. From prayer we carry a peace and restfulness that remain; that are wrought into our souls; and we carry them everywhere, into pleasures and duties, business, study, household work, in the dusty common high road, where we bear with all others the burden and heat of the day.

The world is feverish, and we cannot withdraw from its contagion. We go into it every morning, and we may feel the emptiness and vanity of it but we are also likely to feel its fever, to be carried away by its haste, and eagerness, and selfishness, to be ruffled and excited by its competition. If we are to resist it, to watch it sweep past with its pomp, and glitter, and rewards, and have no care to join it, let us pray. Let us overcome in prayer the worldliness and fever of our own hearts. Realizing that God plans for us, that we are of a kingdom that God plans for us, that we are of a kingdom infinitely wider and nobler than the world, we shall learn to wait quietly with our times in God's hand.

We must expect to hear false estimates of our conduct; to be credited with unworthy motives; to meet slander, and deceit, and ingratitude; to have our sense of duty aspersed, ridiculed, isolated; to be deserted by friends, and pained by

busy tongues. It is galling to bear: it kindles a man's resentment; provokes him to recrimination; leads him into heat. Yet we gain nothing by angry retort; and if such hurts as these prey upon us, they must weaken our energy and influence for good. If we submit them all to God we do wisely. When we have poured them into his ear, our minds are relieved. He should be the first to know them. Perhaps there is some truth in what we hear. Let us weigh it over in prayer: we shall be the wiser and calmer for it. We shall have felt that the truest love we have has not changed, we shall have gained strength and time to take one more look at the Man of sorrows: the next time the wound will not be so deep.

There may happen great losses and reverses--trials like death, that threaten the very foundation of our life; or like incurable pain, that make the future look dark and interminable. Even these may be borne with calmness: neither passively nor stoically, for then it were only the semblance of calm; but sensitively, yet with the firmest faith in God's goodness. Under the daily calm of prayer, patience and fortitude grow up like tender flowers beneath a peaceful sky; and when the hour of sorrow comes the heart by its own wont will turn to God, and from prayer we shall go back among men chastened, and not killed.

And in the household there may be asperities of temper, prominences or defects of character, that are

equally unpleasant, causes for discontent and blame, roots of bitterness that spring up. A child's fault, a servant's misconduct, a hasty spirit, a quick cutting word, a sharp answer, may do much mischief. We may give pain without intending it. It is in prayer that the fittest temper will be won, that we shall earn forbearance. Such calm souls we have all known: whose sweetness penetrated every member of the home, who bore themselves unruffled —

“Whom by the softest step and gentlest tone  
Enfeebled spirits own.”

By such calmness we may be known ourselves, though none but God shall know how dear it cost us.

3. *It will hallow our daily life.* — We cannot detach our common life from our spiritual. We cannot live to God with one nature, and to man with another. The common life is so common, so much taken up with food and raiment, profit and loss, that we would fain cultivate our spiritual faculties by themselves. We fancy it would make our devotion pure if we could keep it from the soil and lowness of common things; that it would wear out its sanctity if we brought it own to our every day routine. But history and experience teach us that if the body be not kept for God there will be little sanctification of the spirit; and the Scriptures assert that both are redeemed by the blood of

Christ, and that both are to be wrought on by the Holy Ghost. It is not so much the difficulty of conceiving this, as the difficulty of realizing it, that makes us shrink from it as if it could not be. For if God's help and blessing are withheld from all but distinctly spiritual acts, the greater part of men's lives, and that which is the most fertile of temptation, is left without control. Nor is there anything evil in this toil that fills up our days. It is necessary to the existence of the world, to the happiness of families, and to health of mind.

The difficulty is one of practice. We sometimes see that the lower wants swamp the higher; that the weariness of work, the strain of either body or mind is made excuse for neglecting spiritual truth; that the cares of this world choke the word and it becometh unfruitful. We feel that our daily duties absorb our attention, that business to be done must be well done, that many of our occupations are petty in comparison with eternity; but since they are to be done we take refuge in the cultivation of a separate religious life, of feelings and duties distinct from the common day. Yet to connect our daily acts of whatever kind with God's will, must surely elevate them, and will not make us less spiritual, but more. If we can feel that it is of God's order men are artisans or ploughmen, merchants or lawyers, it must help us to look reverently up to Him from the bench, or the plough, or the counting-house. And if we feel that

the pettiest circumstance is not beneath God's thought, it must be to the gain of our piety.

It is these thoughts that are brought up by daily prayer. Its whole drift is to connect the day with God, to lead us to believe that no part of it is indifferent to Him, that Paul was as much following out His plan when he wrought with his own hands as when he preached the gospel. The tendency of most work is to absorb us at the time. We must throw ourselves into it heartily, if we are to succeed. If we have every worked abstractedly, with minds preoccupied, and drifting along currents of thought that carry us from our immediate business, we have worked badly; and because we are best to keep the one thought, we pray our Father to remember us in it. The sanctity of life may consist as well in the righteousness, honour, and fidelity of our duty, as in the hallowed hours of meditation.

If the work is to be done, let it be well done. If it is not a properly religious act, let it be acted in the spirit of devout man. Buying in the funds, cutting a railway, sailing a ship, serving a household, are not religious acts; but they are not therefore irreligious. They are of a kind that all men must do, that human life requires, although, compared with worship, they belong to an outer world. And God's guidance is as true to us in one world of thought or action as another. If the conditions are such as He has imposed, we can claim and assuredly we shall need his help: not



necessarily to give us divided thoughts, but to keep our motives pure, our standard of duty that we are his children, our conduct honourable.

The effect of committing life thus to God will be to prevent what all Christians bewail, the deadening of their piety, the loss of the keen edge of religious feeling, the flagging of interest in God's kingdom, the lowering of their Christian tone, the gradual hiding and forgetting of the invisible behind the visible. For they learn to feel how God watches all life, week-day and sabbath-day; how they never cease to be disciples of Christ; how, at any time, God's hand may sweep away their difficulties; how, in business even, they walk by faith, believing in a wisdom, support, and integrity that come from above. Convinced that their business is under God's care, they are not disturbed by sudden revulsions of feeling from secular to sacred, but work with a peace and satisfaction unknown to others. The risks, disappointments, irritations, perplexities that they meet are borne with greater strength, for the possibility of them has been foreseen in prayer. The sense of God's presence is with them, calms them, keeps them from extremes. And by all this their work is hallowed, and connected with god's plan, and with those great issues of life that flow out into eternity.

Such will be the effect of prayer upon daily life — Simplicity, Calm, and Sanctity; yet not as if these exhausted

its influence. It will be felt in other directions as well — in other blessings, of which these may be taken only as examples. I have regarded it apart from all special petitions. We have the widest latitude to ask, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and we have confidence that our asking will be followed by a giving. If the special petitions we might bring were included, the result would be more singular. What result there is will follow even from the habit of prayer alone. Habit it must be. It was connected with Abraham's wanderings, the increase of his flocks, every new settlement, his daily thoughts. It must be as much connected with ourselves. It will produce nothing if it be irregular, spasmodic, maintained for a time and allowed to drop. Emergencies will often draw spiritual thoughts out of their obscurity, as they draw great men. Sodom and Moriah must have opened depths in Abraham's heart of which he was not conscious. But when the power that touches these secret springs is withdrawn, like fountains opened by an earthquake, they close. A life may be marked by epochs, but it will be moulded by every day. Our prayer must be constant; our altar builded every where. As we shift from youth to age, from town to town, through narrow circumstances upwards to success, or by reverses down to poverty, let every spot and change be marked by the altar, and the days of every resting -place by calling upon the name of the Lord. Amen. — W. FLEMING STEVENSON.

---

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

OF GOD'S APPEARING TO ELIJAH IN HOREB.

ONE would think that Elijah must have been quite drenched, running before Ahab's chariot in the great rain all the way from Carmel to Jezreel. But I am sure he did not mind that much: he was so glad to think that the heart of the people had been turned back again to seek the true God. I think as he ran he would be calling up in his mind the grandness of the scene when the fire of God fell from heaven, and would seem as if he heard over again the great shout that rose from the crowd as they fell on their faces, crying, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God. But perhaps after he got home and the excitement had gone down, he became really unwell with fatigue and cold, so as to be more easily daunted with a message which came next day to him from the queen. For the great prophet was a man subject to 'like passions,' as James says, with ourselves, and in him weariness of body would help, as in us, to make the spirit weak, too. Be that as it may, we are now to see Elijah a very different man from what he was on Carmel. The change came about in this way. When

Jezebel, the king's wife, heard that Elijah had ordered all the priests of Baal to be killed, she was filled with fierce rage; so angry was she, that, after swearing by her gods that she would take Elijah's life as he had taken the priests', she sent to tell him that she had done so, and would kill him the very next day; not thinking how she was going him warning that he might escape. People in hot rage often do things which go against their own ends. Now what would you expect the bold Elijah to do when the queen's message came to him? I think you would be ready to say, He will trust in God, and have no fear of her threat. He will, at least, ask God what he should do. But no; he rose up and fled for his life. God had some great lessons to teach him far away, and he left him to his own fear and weakness. So, as I have said, without staying to pray to God about it, or waiting at least, for an answer, he took a servant with him and fled. Away to the south he went, through the kingdom of Judah, till he came to Beer-sheba, its very farthest town on the edge of the desert. Here he left his servant, but himself, as if he did not feel yet quite safe, travelled a whole day further into the wilderness. He found there a juniper tree and lay down under its shade, and began to pray to God to let him die. He said, O Lord, take away my life, for I am not better than my fathers.

Here, you may say, is a strange thing; Elijah fled for his life, and now he is weary of it. But such things are

common in men's moods of mind. Besides, it was both for the prophet himself and the people, to die by the will of God answering his prayer. It is well to notice, too, his complaint that he was no better than the prophets that went before him. He does not mean that he was as sinful as they, but that he had proved as weak to do good as they had been. After hearing the people shout on Carmel, he thought they would worship idols no more; but after the queen's message, he saw how soon the power of a bad court would draw them back again to Baal. He began to think all that had happened on Carmel had happened in vain and his spirit sunk as low as his hopes had been high. He said to himself, I may as well give up trying to do any good, and he prayed to God to take him from the earth.

He asked for death, but God sent him sleep. Then, as he lay sleeping, God bade an angel go serve him. So, the angel came down and baked a cake for him, and placed it with a cup of water close beside where his head was lying. Then he touched him, and said, Wake up and eat. Elijah woke at the angel's touch, and seeing the bread and water, he ate and drank. No doubt he felt refreshed, but he was still weary, and lay down to sleep again. After a while, the angel touched and woke him a second time, and bade him eat, for he was to take a long journey, and would need all the strength he could get. So getting up, he did eat and drink, and then set out on his way. For forty days he did

not eat again, going on as God led him and held him up, till he came to Mount Horeb, far in the desert. That was the mountain, you know, on which God came down from heaven to give his law to his people Israel, when he had brought them out of Egypt. Here Elijah found a cave, and went in and lodged in it; still, I suppose, fasting. For the journey probably did not last all the forty days, as the distance to be travelled was only one hundred and fifty miles. Perhaps Elijah's fast continued till God brought him back from the desert to the land of Israel again.

While Elijah was staying in the cave, he heard God speaking to him, and asking him what he did there? This question was to bring out the state of the prophet's mind, and to prepare him for what God was going to show him. He was quite ready with his answer; he said that he had been very earnest, leading for God with the people, but all to no purpose: they had killed all the prophets but himself, and now they were seeking his life, and he had been obliged to flee out of the way. That was what had brought him to the desert. God then told Elijah to come out of the cave and stand on the mountain, and watch what was to follow. So he went out and stood in the open air. While he was standing here, a great strong wind swept over Horeb, and cast down rocks and dashed them to pieces, and Elijah knew that God had sent it, but he did not come himself in the wind. After the storm had passed the mountain began to

shake and tremble, and the prophet felt that God had sent another agent of his great power, an earthquake; but neither in this did he come himself. When the ground had got settled after the earthquake, another scene opened. The mountain was wrapt in fire, and the flames moved and gleamed all around, terrible to see. The prophet knew it was God's fire, but neither did he show himself in that. Then behind all these fearful things, when the fire had ceased to burn and all was calm, Elijah heard a soft still voice, and knew that God was near him now, and he hid his face in his mantle. Again God asked him what he was doing there, and getting the same answer, he went on to show that the prophet was mistaken in thinking that no good people were left in Israel, for there were seven thousand who had never bowed a knee to idols. Then he told him to go back from the wilderness, for there was work for him still to do. He was to anoint a person named to be king of Syria, another to be king of Israel, and Elisha to be prophet in his own room. All this Elijah went away to do.

But what could be the meaning of the strange and striking vision which the prophet had at Horeb? It taught a lesson to Elijah, and it was a grand prophecy of things far away. You must have noticed that Elijah's great works in Israel were works of judgment--bringing famine, slaying the idol-priests, burning up the wicked captains with their fifties. Now God wanted to teach Elijah that although such

works were needed, yet he must not be surprised that they did not win the people's hearts back to their God. That was to come by gentler means. So the Lord did not show himself in the storm, or the earthquake, or the fire, but came in the still small voice. Elijah's ministry was to prepare for another, which would show more of mercy than of judgment. So almost all the great works wrought by Elisha, who came after him, were miracles of kindness and grace. But beyond that, immediate explanation of the vision, it went to prophesy what would happen long after. It said that the law given at Horeb, amid fire and shaking of the mount and black storm, was not meant and not fitted to win the world for God; that it was to make ready for the coming of love; and this came when Jesus, meek and lowly, gentle and kind, came into the world, to see and to save that which was lost, by giving his life for them, and drawing them to himself.

In this age of love, this time of the still small voice, you, dear young readers, live. Have you felt the love draw you? Have you heard the soft sweet voice speak to your hearts? Here is something of what it says, hush! listen! --Come to me, come to me, I will give you rest.

-----



## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Do you remember an eminent servant of Jesus Christ, that once stood wet and cold before a fire?
2. Can you name a person who changed very soon from great boldness to cowardice?
3. Do you recollect another great prophet who fled into the desert from fear that his life would be taken?
4. Who was it that would not flee when a message was brought him that there was a plot against his life?
5. What other still greater person once received tidings that his life was sought for by a wicked king, and bade those who advised him to flee, to carry a bold message back to him?
6. What incident gave Beer-sheba its name? and what is the meaning of it?
7. What other prophet wanted God to take away his life?
8. To whom did angels bring food after a fast of forty days and nights in the desert?
9. Where and how often did Moses fast for forty days?
10. What prophets lodged and were fed in caves; and what good men were driven to such haunts by cruel persecution?
11. Can you find a prophecy which foretold that Jesus would speak with a gentle and winning voice?

12. Who was it that by a ministry like Elijah's prepared for another full of mercy?

13. What scene in Christ's life showed that Horeb, as Moses and Elijah saw it, was to yield to Calvary in the conquest of the world?

ANSWERS to the foregoing can be found by consulting Acts xxviii.; John xviii.; Exod. ii., Acts vii.; Neh. vi.; Luke xiii.; Gen. xxi.; Jonah iv.; Matt. iv.; Deut. ix.; 1 Kings xviii.; Heb. xi.; Heb. xi.; Isa. xli., Isa. xlii.; Luke i. and iii.; Luke ix.

-----

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE LESSONS.

1. Are all believers freed from condemnation?

2. Does the death of Christ secure that believers shall be delivered from the power as well as from the punishment of sin?

3. Was this the design of God in giving his Son to die for sinners? Rom. viii. 3, 4.

4. Will all the children of God be glorified together with Christ at last? Rom. viii. 17.

-----

*Prayer.*

O LORD God, the bravest and the boldest cannot stand without Thee. Do not allow us to think at any time that we can stand in our own strength. When we feel weak, let us lean on Thy help. We bless Thee that Thou dost promise to give power to the faint, and when Thou dost strengthen Thy people are made able to do and bear all things. Thou dost not cast off Thy servants that trust in Thee, and even when they fall Thou raisest them up again. O Lord, we praise Thy name that Jesus has come to make all this plainer to us than before. We thank Thee for His great service of love on the earth. We rejoice to think how gentle and meek he was, and how he is not changed now. May his kindness win and hold us, and may we listen always to His voice, doing what he bids, and going where he leads. May we hear it speak sweetly to us when we come to die, and can hear no voice but His. All this we ask for His mercies' sake. Amen.

-----

## EVENING WORSHIP.

OUR God and Father, who in Thy love hast given Jesus Christ to die for the sins of the world, and hast raised Him up that our faith and hope might be in Thee, grant that we, dying unto sin by the power of His cross, may also know the power of His resurrection, so that we may daily rise to newness of life in Him, and with Him enter even here into perfect rest in Thee.

HYMN, *or Psalm lvii.* 1, 2, 11.

NOW, gracious Lord, thine arm reveal,  
And make thy glory known;  
Now let us all thy presence feel,  
And soften hearts of stone!

Help us to venture near thy throne,  
And plead a Saviour's name:  
For all that we can call our own  
Is vanity and shame.

Send down thy Spirit from above,  
That saints may love thee more;

And sinners now may learn to love,  
Who never loved before.

And when before Thee we appear,  
In our eternal home,  
May growing numbers worship here,  
And praise Thee in our room!

### ROMANS VIII. 1-27.

THERE is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 2. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. 3. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: 4. That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 5. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. 6. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. 7. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed

can be. 8. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God, &c.

-----

*Prayer.*

We bless Thee, O God, the God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, that with Thee there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning; that as Thou wast so Thou art; that as we come to Thee in prayer, we find in Thee what all our fathers found. We bless Thee that through the changes of our life, and the changes of the world, and the fleeting and perishing of all we see on earth, Thou abidest our God and Father in heaven. We beg of Thee now for Thy grace, and that it may please thee to strengthen our faith and encourage us to pray. Give us childlike confidence in Thee. Help us to remember that we are Thy children, and that to be Thy children Thou hast redeemed us by the precious blood of our Redeemer. May we trust thee, O God, without a doubt, and trust to Thee all our interests and all our life, our cares, anxieties, and troubles, our kindred and friends, Let us be drawn ever nearer to Thee by Thy good and holy Spirit, whom Thou hast sent to dwell in our hearts. May

He sustain us in unbroken fellowship with Thee. May He bear daily witness to us that we have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, that to them that are in Jesus there is no condemnation. May we be preserved from all estrangement; and when our sins cloud over Thy face, Father, may we confess our sins, since, for Christ's sake, thou art faithful and just to forgive them to us.

We raise our prayers to Thee at this altar of our household. Blessed be Thy name that Thou hearest us; be that we can bring all our burdens to Thee here; that though Thou knowest our inmost thoughts, our secret faults, our infirmities, and all the corruption of our hearts, Thou dost not turn us away from Thee, but dost bid us ask that we may receive, and that our joy may be full. And here, O God, we thank Thee for the strength and merciful comfort of Thy word, for the blessings of Thy holy day, for Thy church and its living witness to Thee, and for the grace of all Thy means of grace. May the strength, and peace, and heavenly thoughts they have given us be daily renewed, so that we may go on from strength to strength until in Zion we appear before God. We feel we might have used Thy gifts to more good; that evil and ungenerous thoughts, and secret lusts, and an unsteady mind, and our self-will, have hindered many of this day's blessings. Our peace and quiet have been broken by the distractions of the world, by our foolish troubles and misgivings, by our judging of others,

and by our want of faith. We come to Thee with a penitent, contrite, and humble heart, for these and all our other sins. Cleanse our hearts from them, O God; and do Thou, Lord Jesus Christ, conquer our hearts entirely for Thyself, and confirm Thy kingdom within us, and spread it without. May the gospel have many triumphs this day, and the light and truth which Thou hast sent forth lead many to Thee. May there be many broken hearts that Thy word has bound up, may sad lives that it has made happy, many lost and prodigals whom it has led back to their Father's house, many closed lips that it has opened, and bitter lots that it has comforted. May Thy ministers, O Christ, preach Thee, and Thy people see Thee. May there be a higher, and holier, and more faithful life throughout Thy church; and may errors and divisions disappear before the mighty power of Thy Holy Spirit.

O God, who hast led us all our life, lead us still, and vouchsafe to us Thy grace that wherever Thou leadest we may follow; and that we may not make our rest on earth, but remember that whilst here we are strangers and pilgrims seeking a better and heavenly country. Lead us to look forward to Thy rest, Thee, and calm the fear of our life in Thy divine love. We commit to Thee our household and all our dear ones: we commit to Thee body, soul, and spirit, that by Thy keeping, O Father, we may sleep at last in sure



and certain hope of a joyful resurrection. Our Father, &c .  
*Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

*Morning.*

**The righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.**

These that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.

They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing; ;

To show that the Lord is upright; he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.

But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

The way of the wicked is as darkness; they know not at what they stumble.

Ps. xcii. 12, 13, 14, 15.      Prov. iv. 18, 19.

*Evening.*

**For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he.**

Therefore they shall come together to the goodness of the Lord, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd; and their soul shall be as an watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all.

Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, both young men and old together: for I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow.

Jer. xxxi. 11, 12, 13.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him.**

I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon.

His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive-tree, and his smell as Lebanon.

They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon.

But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.

Hos. xiv. 4, 5, 6, 7. Mal. iv. 2.

*Evening.*

**I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.**

Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

Abide in me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring out fruit, and that your fruit should remain; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

John xv. 1, 2, 3, 4, 16.

**WEDNESDAY.**

*Morning.*

**What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.**

But now, being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment.

Rom. vi. 21, 22, 23.      Rom. vii. 4.      Phil. i. 9.

*Evening.*

**For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light;**

(For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth;)

Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence, till the day of Christ;

Being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

Eph. v. 8, 9, 10, 11.      Phil. i. 10, 11.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**Walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.**

As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:

Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with faith, with thanksgiving.

Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ:

For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

Col. i. 10.      Col. ii. 6, 7, 8, 9.

*Evening.*

**For where envying and strife is, there is confusion, and every evil work.**

But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness:

But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

James iii. 16, 17, 18.

2. Peter iii. 17, 18.

## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.**

For by it the elders obtained a good report:

Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions;

(Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in the deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:

God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

Heb. xi. 1, 2, 33, 38, 39, 40.

*Evening.*

**Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.**

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

Acts xvi. 31.      John iii. 16, 18.      John v. 24.

## **SATURDAY.**

*Morning.*

**Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness;**

Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:

Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son;

In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.

Col. i. 11, 12, 13, 14.

*Evening.*

**And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among them which are sanctified.**

We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;

So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God, for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure.

Acts xx. 32.

2 Thess. i. 3, 4.



# HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

## TWENTY-FIRST WEEK.

### MORNING WORSHIP.

OUR Father in heaven! We read in Thy holy word, that because we know not what to pray for as we ought, Thy Holy Spirit helpeth our infirmities. Grant that on this occasion we may experience His gracious assistance. We have often been conscious of distraction of mind and of wandering thoughts in the worship of Thy holy name, and we fear lest we should now be hindered in our praises and prayers. That we may worship Thee aright we ask the aid of the Holy Ghost, which we beseech Thee to grant unto us according to Thy promise, and for Jesus Christ's sake.

*Amen.*

HYMN, or *Psalm cxliii.* 6-10.

ETERNAL Spirit! by whose power  
Are burst the bands of death,  
On our cold hearts thy blessings shower,  
Revive them with thy breath.

Tis thine to cheer us when distressed;  
To raise us when we fall;  
To calm the doubting, troubled breast,  
And aid when sinners call;

Tis thine to ring God's sacred word,  
And write it in each heart;  
There its reviving truths record,  
And there its peace impart.

Almighty Spirit, visit thus  
Our hearts, and guide our ways;  
Pour down thy quickening grace on us,  
And tune our lips to praise.

## PSALM XXXII.

BLESSED is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. 2. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity and in whose spirit there is no guile. 3. When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long: 4. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me; my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. 5. I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine

iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. 6. For this shall everyone that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him. 7. Thou art my hiding-place: thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. 8. I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye. 9. Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding; whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee. 10. Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about. 11. Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.

#### HOSEA XIV.

O ISRAEL, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. 2. Take with you words, and turn to the Lord: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips. 3. Asshur shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses; neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, Ye

are our gods: for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy. 4. I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him. 5. I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. 6. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon. 7. They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon. 8. Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard him, and observed him: I am like a green fir tree. From me is thy fruit found. 9. Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein.

## 2 CORINTHIANS, VII. 1-10.

HAVING therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. 2. Receive us; we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man. 3. I speak not this to condemn you: for I have said before, that ye are in our hearts to die and live with you. 4. Great is my boldness of speech toward you,

great is my glorying of you: I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation. 5. For, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side: without were fightings, within were fears. 6. Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus; 7. And not by his coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me; so that I rejoiced the more. 8. For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season. 9. Now I rejoyce, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing.

---

*Prayer.*

OUR heavenly Father! suffer us now to pray unto Thee. Thou hast given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, all which are Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus.

We ask that these words of grace and truth may be fulfilled in our experience. Thou hast promised abundantly to pardon : grant unto us the forgiveness of sins. Thou hast promised to put thy laws in the mind and to write them in the heart: transfer thy holy commandments to our spirits, we beseech Thee. Thou hast promised to be a Father to those who come out of the world and are separate: be then, we beseech Thee, a Father unto us, and train us to live as the sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty. Thou hast given to all believers a promise of rest: may we through faith enter into rest, enjoying now the rest which remaineth for the people of God. Thou hast promised comfort and succour in affliction: when we pass through the waters be thou with us that they may not overflow us, and when we pass through the fire be thou with us that it may not consume us. Thou hast promised help in temptation: when we are tempted to make a way for our escape that we may be able to bear it. Thou hast promised us eternal life, and this is named in Thy word as Thy chief gift: give us, we pray Thee, although we deserve the wages of sin, this inestimable gift, everlasting life. Good things, more than we can mention, Thou hast promised: fulfil to us, we beseech Thee, all Thy most gracious words, and so strengthen our faith that we may lay hold of them with a firm and earnest grasp.

And seeing, O God of hope, that Thou hast given all these promises that we may abound in hope, we pray one fruit of our faith in Thy words may be the expectation of good. May a good hope through grace be the anchor of our soul, and may it be our helmet covering our head in every day of conflict.

On this day we especially ask that the promise of rest may be fulfilled unto us all. Grant us rest from fear and from care, from regret and from foreboding, from sorrow and from sin; and may this rest be sanctified to our spiritual refreshment, so that after this day of holy quiet we may be better fitted for the duties of this new week. And grant, merciful Father, we beseech Thee, that when we come to the end of all our working days on earth, we may be cheered by the bright prospect of the rest of heaven, and may pass through death to that blessed consummation of our life of faith on earth.

We do not, O merciful Father, confine our prayers to ourselves, but according to thine own directions, we make supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks for all men. We pray Thee to bless our Queen, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and all the royal family. May they all be true disciples of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We pray Thee to direct the ministers of state, and all our rulers, imparting unto them the wisdom that cometh from above. Assist the judges and magistrates, that they may

not bear the sword in vain. Bless all sorts and conditions of men in Great Britain, Ireland, and the Colonies. Increase the number of true Christians daily, and purify and extend the influence of those who are called to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as in heaven.”

God be merciful unto us, and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us, that Thy way may be known upon earth, Thy saving health among all nations. Let the people praise Thee, O God, let all the people praise Thee.” Bless this day all preachers of Thy gospel, O blessed God.

Inspire them that their words may be with power, and that the message which they deliver may be mighty through Thee. Help all teachers in Christian schools, that they may teach, not themselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord. Direct all parents and masters in the instruction of their families, and grant that the children of all Christians may grow in the knowledge of their Saviour. O send out Thy light and Thy truth. Send Thy light wherever now darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people. It is not Thy will that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

Remove blindness from the Jews, we pray Thee, that Israel may be saved; and so baptize the nations with the Holy Ghost, that the fulness of the Gentiles may be brought into Thy church.



We acknowledge to Thee, O Holy Father, our manifold sins. We have transgressed Thy holy law, and need the pardon which Thou alone canst give. Pardon us, O Lord our God, as we have already asked Thee, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

We bless Thee for Thy pity, and patience, and long-suffering. Thou has not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For all Thy gifts and for all Thy goodness our hearts thank Thee; especially do we thank Thee for the love Thou hast shown us in the gift of Thine only-begotten and well-beloved Son. Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift. Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things: and blessed be His glorious name for ever, and let the whole earth be filled with His glory. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

ALMIGHTY God, Father of all mercies! Thou hast made us capable of knowing and of loving Thee, and Thou hast revealed Thyself unto us men, that we may not be without the knowledge of Thy name. Incline us to listen to the

heavens as they declare Thy glory, and to look upon the firmament as showing thy handiwork. Move us to read diligently Thy holy word. Above all incline us to study the life and character of Jesus Christ, Thy Son, that in Him, as the brightness of Thy Glory, and the express image of Thy person, we may see Thyself, and beholding thee, love and serve Thee in Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* xxv. 7-10.

GRACE, t'is a charming sound,  
Harmonious to the ear;  
Heaven with the echo shall resound,  
And all the earth shall hear.

Grace first contrived the way  
To save rebellious man;  
And all the steps that grace display,  
Which drew the wondrous plan.

Grace taught my wandering feet  
To tread the heavenly road;  
And new supplies each hour I meet,  
While pressing on to God.

Grace all the work shall crown  
Through everlasting days;  
In lays in heaven the topmost stone,  
And well deserves the praise.

## PSALM XIX.

THE heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. 2. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. 3. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. 4. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun; 5. Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. 6. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof. 7. The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple: 8. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes: 9. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. 10. More to be desired are they than gold, yea,

than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and the honey-comb. 11. Moreover, by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward. 12. Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults. 13. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. 14. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer.

#### ROMANS V. 1-11.

THEREFORE, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: 2. By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 3. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; 4. And patience, experience; and experience, hope: 5. And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. 6. For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. 7. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.

8. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 9. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. 10. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. 11. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

#### HEBREWS X. 19-25.

HAVING therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20. By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the vail, that is to say, his flesh; 21. And having an high priest over the house of God; 22. Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. 23. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) 24. And let us consider one another, to provoke unto love, and to good works: 25. Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

-----

## SERMON XXI.

“TO TESTIFY THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD.”

--Acts xx. 24.

“GOD” --what different thoughts and emotions this word suggests and awakens in different minds! “God” -- “There is no God,” saith the atheist. “God” -- “There is a God, but he has little or nothing to do with any of us,” saith the deist. “God” -- “I believe in God,” saith the ungodly, but I have no time to inquire about him or to think of him. “God” saith the erring and unenlightened spirit--“He is too merciful to punish sin;” or “he is too just to forgive sin; he is an austere man, reaping where he has not sown.” “God,” saith the sin-stricken soul -- “He is a terror to me.” “God,” saith the enlightened and contrite spirit -- “O that I knew where I could find him, that I might come even to his seat.” “God,” saith the disciple of Jesus Christ-- “God --He is my Father. Blessed be God! Blessed be his glorious name for ever, and let the whole earth be filled with his glory.”

There is a God. We are conscious of his existence. Our spirits feel him to be near. And this sense of his existence and of his presence is confirmed by the testimony of the things he has made. Of the attributes of God we have no correct or adequate notion, apart from special divine

revelation. We know that God is in every sense supreme, and we see by his works that the Maker of all things is mighty, wise, righteous, and benevolent. But where is the oracle in creation, or in my own spirit, that speaks to me of God's grace?

The grace of God is not the simple benevolence of God, but love cleaving to its object when that object has become unlovely and unloving; love ministering when the beneficiaries have actually forfeited all claim and lost all merit and worthiness; love cleaving to those who are repulsive and hateful; love seeking to enrich the impoverished, to assist the weakened and exhausted, to reform the depraved, to elevate the degraded, and to deliver from punishment the guilty. And where in creation, or within my own spirit, is the oracle that tells me that God's love has taken or will ever take this gracious form? The material world and my own entire constitution show me that if I transgress God's laws I must suffer; but they present no indications of redeeming and restoring grace. With the grace of God I can become acquainted, only by the gospel of that grace.

But let us tarry for a moment to reflect what the grace of God must be. Like God, the grace of God is *self-existent and eternal*. He has not been constrained to be gracious. He has not lived to become gracious. His mercy is from everlasting to everlasting. As before creation creative

energy was pent up in the divine nature, so before sin was committed, or sorrow felt, the grace of God was in existence. The grace of God is the grace of *the living God*--a vital, active, stirring principle, ready for expression from eternity, and manifested to man on the first occasion. The grace of God is *all-sufficient and almighty*, able to descend to the lowest depths, to ascend to the loftiest heights, to expand itself to the utmost embrace of its objects and to proceed even to the uttermost--no blind impulse, but love seeking the lost in eternal light; no foolish emotions, but depth of feeling with depths of wisdom; no unworthy sympathy with the sinner, but love pure as the crystal is clear and holy as the sun is bright. *The grace of God is godlike grace* -- an ocean of mercy shoreless and unfathomable; a firmament of mercy cloudless and infinite; an arm of mercy almighty and stretched out still; a hand of mercy full of blessing for the sinful and the guilty. The grace of God is sovereign as his own will, yet never capricious; free and unbought as air and light, yet given according to covenant and promise; full even to unsearchableness, yet flowing to us in streams adapted to our sorrow and to our sins; variable in manifestation, yet in itself immutable.

This grace of God is revealed by the gospel, and by the gospel alone. This word gospel had long been used to designate the announcement of joyous events--as the birth



of a child, a coming of age, a propitious marriage, recovery from sickness, the advent of prosperity in any such form as a victory or deliverance from any personal, domestic, or national evil. And the sacred writers employ it to represent the announcement of the following facts:--

1. *That God loves the world.* God knows that his image in man is defaced; that the imagination of man's heart is evil; that we have all gone out of the way; that we have gone astray like lost sheep; that there is none righteous, no, not one; and that the whole world is guilty before him; yet He loves the world. God cannot blame himself for man's fall. He can find no fault with his first commandment, and he made man upright; yet he loves the world. God hates sin; he punishes sin, and he will destroy many of the wicked; yet he loves the world. There are in the world those who are elect according to the foreknowledge of God; yet he loves the world. We may ask, why did he, foreknowing all, permit sin to enter and to abound? Why does he not urge forward more swiftly the dispensation of his grace? We feel these difficulties and mysteries, and we have no explanation to offer; still we reiterate upon divine authority that God loves the world.

2. *God gave to be the Saviour of the world his Son*--his own Son, only begotten and well beloved. An unspeakable gift! The value of this gift is unspeakable. All calculations and illustrations of the preciousness of Jesus Christ fall far

short of his glory. In giving his Son to be our Saviour, God gives himself. Our Redeemer is not a redeeming man or a redeeming angel, but the redeeming God. And see the value and importance of this fact! Our salvation is committed to the only begotten Son of God. He knows all that is required; and he is willing. That which he does to save us is performed with perfect knowledge, consummate wisdom, complete righteousness, and perfect love. He who made all things, and without whom nothing was made, is given to be our Saviour. Thanks be unto God for this unspeakable gift.

3. *God made his Son Jesus Christ sin for us*--that is, God accounted his sinless Son a sinner, and afflicted him as such, that the punishment due to our transgressions might be remitted--remitted consistently with the claims of justice and of divine law. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all." "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." And is this gospel? Can we rejoice in suffering--in the suffering of another, of another for us, of another for our sins, of the Son of God for our sins? These tidings must ever be characterized by features which are sorrowful and awful; still they are good tidings. God making his Son a

sin-offering is consistent with eternal love for his Son; and, at the same time, is a marvellous exhibition of his love for our race. Besides this, the bearing our own sins would ruin us, but Christ bearing our sins for us, although it involved humiliation, suffering, and death, did not destroy him; on the contrary, it was his path to a throne of peculiar grandeur and glory, while it is the means of our salvation. Although, therefore, with the sorrows of the smitten Redeemer we mourn, in the design and effect of these sorrows we cannot but rejoice.

4. *As by the disobedience of one many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.* The Son of God was not only made a curse for us; he was made a blessing for us. He not only suffered, he also sanctified himself. He not only endured the penalty of the law; he also fulfilled the law. He not only represents us as a punished transgressor; he also represents us as a righteous head. The man Christ Jesus is a representative man; he is the second Adam: so that, as by our sins being imputed to him our punishment may be remitted, by his righteousness being reckoned to us we may be justified. This justification, on the basis of the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, is no false position or fictitious state, because it is taken with the perfect knowledge and full consent of the law-giver and judge (it is, in fact, the provision of the law-giver and judge), and because it is

recognized as the free gift of the eternal mercy. Apart from such a provision no flesh living could be justified; but herein is justification for the ungodly. And seeing that, without such justification, the results of sin and guilt, even though punishment were remitted, must cleave unto us, we perceive that the announcement of God's provision for this purpose is good tidings of great joy.

5. *God has exalted his Son a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance and remission of sin.* Jesus Christ humbled himself to lay the foundation of the dispensation of divine mercy, and he is exalted to carry up the superstructure, and to place the topmost stone. Jesus Christ suffered to make atonement for sin, and he is glorified to apply that atonement to individual salvation. Jesus Christ was delivered into the hands of wicked men that he might suffer, the just for the unjust; and he is enthroned that he may bring us to God. He laid down his life that his sheep might not die; and he has taken it again that his sheep may live. He endured the cross to remove it from our shoulder; and he has taken a crown that he may put a diadem upon our brow. An enthroned Redeemer! with the earth and the sun and the universe at his feet; with hell subject to him, and all heaven obedient to his will; with all things placed under his control. In his hands we may well be quiet from the fear of evil, and may be saved by hope. All things are ours, if we have committed our souls into the hands of the Saviour.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? “I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

6. *Whosoever believeth in the Son of God shall not perish, but shall have everlasting life.* This is another of those facts which God calls the gospel. Sin dooms the transgressor to perish. There is a natural connection between sin and destruction, iniquity and ruin. God can disturb or destroy that connection--but God alone. He who begins to sin, begins to perish; and he who continues in sin, hastens to perish. To perish! this is not to lose being or existence, but to lose blessedness. It is the perdition of all love--even of self-love; the loss of all hope and joy and peace; the perdition of a good conscience and of godliness; the loss of all that renders existence richly and fully animated, holy, happy, and godlike. To perish is to be like a potter's vessel when broken to pieces, like a tree scathed by a storm or blighted, like a piece of silver condemned as reprobate, like a wreck cast high and dry upon the shore, like a sheep wandering hopelessly, and torn at every step. To perish is to feel broken and scathed, blighted, condemned, and lost, without hope of deliverance, and with the cursing of self as the cause of the ruin. Not to

perish--this is good news! And what shall we say about this “everlasting life?” To live in the image of God--is to live in purity and righteousness--to live in complete holiness and perfect happiness--to live in ever-growing godlikeness--to live with saints and angels--to live with Christ--to live where God reveals himself most perfectly, and holds the closest possible communion with all around him--to live seeing God, rejoicing in God, and reflecting God’s glory--is to have “everlasting life.” And this exemption from perdition, this introduction to eternal life, is by believing. God grants exemption from punishment upon our acceptance of pardon, and he bestows life as an act of free grace. To be pardoned upon asking forgiveness as God directs, to be justified upon seeking to abide under the shadow of a perfect representative, to be regenerated and sanctified by submitting ourselves to certain spiritual divine influences, to regain Paradise by union with its true heir, to be saved by simply trusting the Saviour--is a dispensation of most wondrous grace.

These facts constitute that which God calls the gospel--the fact that God loves the world, that he sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world, that his Son was made sin for us, that by his obedience many are made righteous, that he is exalted a Prince and a Saviour, and that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. These facts are gospel--the best news that

ever reached earth; the best that were ever sent from heaven.

The gospel of the grace of God can be known only as it is revealed and preached. Reason cannot discover it. Experience and observation cannot reach it. It is above the creative power of human thought, reason, and imagination, even as a scheme; and as a system of fact it is historical, and can be known only by testimony.

Let us, moreover, here observe, that nothing which reason can discover or experience reach can ever take the place of the gospel.

In the first instance, God revealed the gospel by his Holy Spirit, and he then required those to whom it was revealed to teach and to preach it. He caused it to be written in holy scripture, and now calls men, who have learned it thence, to proclaim it. There is no work so honourable, and none so important, as the labour of those who testify the gospel of the grace of God. They have good news for every creature. They reveal God's existence to the atheist. They show the true God to the idolater, and the besetting God to the deist. They convey truth to the sceptic. They exhibit great and glorious things to the scorner, and the way of life to the anxious inquirer, and the mercy seat to the weeping penitent, and certainty to the troubled doubter, and consolation to the son of sorrow, and redemption to the slave of evil, and salvation, free, full, and

everlasting to every sinner. And the preaching of the gospel is God's power unto salvation. Faith follows hearing, and hearing necessitates preaching. How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of them that bring these good tidings!

Our first duty is to believe the gospel--so to believe it as to take full advantage of its provisions. Our second duty is to be assured that we have life. Doubt upon this point is exceedingly dangerous. There may be reason for doubting: but some persons cherish doubt as indicating godly fear, salutary suspicion, and healthy self-distrust. In their judgment, to be clothed with doubt is to be clad with humility. But who bids us doubt? What inclines us to doubt? Whom do we doubt, or what? "Know ye not yourselves?" Is there not a conscious difference between darkness and light, death and life, coldness and fervour, a barren heart and a spirit filled with the fruits of righteousness?

Our next duty is to live according to the gospel--so to order our conversation that our inner and outer man, our character and our conduct, our plans and pursuits, may all harmonize with our faith in the love of God and in the mission of Jesus Christ.

And besides this, it is our manifest duty to endeavour to communicate the gospel to our fellow men. Every believer may act the part of an echo to heralds who first proclaimed



the gospel--to the ambassadors who first delivered the message of salvation. Who is there among us who cannot say to his neighbour, God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son? There are many believers who cannot teach or expound; but every believer may proclaim the gospel, and every believer may commend the gospel to his fellows by the joyousness and hopefulness of his spirit, the kindness of his disposition, the truthfulness of his words, the godliness of his character, the usefulness and holiness of his life. Moreover, every believer may pray God to raise up faithful preachers of his holy gospel, and to sustain those who now carry the good tidings to their fellow men. And we have more faith in prayer, as a means of calling out labourers to the harvest, than in any other instrumentality. There are many believers who can teach the gospel to a household, to two or three gathered together, to a class in a school, or to an entire school; while some can preach the gospel--and woe be unto them if they do not. Like Jonah, they may refuse to go to Nineveh, but God will take care that they do not reach Tarshish. There are ministers who ought to be merchants, and there are merchants who ought to be ministers; there are professional men who ought to be preachers, and preachers who ought to be professional men; there are teachers who ought to be tradesmen, and tradesmen who ought to be teachers. All who are called to preach the gospel are not following their

vocation, and some are preaching uncalled. May the love of Christ constrain those whom God hath called! And further, every believer can sustain those who preach the gospel by sympathy, co-operation, prayer, and the contribution of property. Let us devote to this object our silver and gold, our houses and our lands. Let the widow give her mite, and the rich their abundance. Let those who have an alabaster consecrate it to this object. Sometimes men complain that they are without law and rule as to giving, and they sigh for the definite directions of the Levitical institutes. But is this complaint well founded? No law as to giving! Is the law of love no law? Is there no rule in Jesus Christ's example, none in that which our blessed Saviour has done for us, none in the value and essential importance of the gospel? No law! Giving is fixed by *this* law--God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son: and by this law--Christ loved us, and gave himself for us. The law hereby expounded and enforced requires that we give the largest and the best. For prayer we have a literal law--Pray without ceasing; continuing instant in prayer. Here our great danger is substituting prayer in word and in form for prayer in spirit and in truth. The full power of prayer remains to be realized. It has done much compared with other agencies, but little compared with what it might do. Would the harvest field be as thin of labourers as it is, if heaven were beset and besieged with the petition -- "Send

forth labourers?” We have prayed, “Thy kingdom come,” and have meant our kingdom. We have asked, “Thy will be done,” and have intended our own will. “We ask, and receive not, because we ask amiss.” In co-operation we have a definite rule-- “As every man hath received the gift, so let him minister, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.” “Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation.” Sympathy cannot be too deep, too full, or too high, and it will be strong in the degree of our love toward Jesus Christ. Where love toward Jesus Christ is fervent, we shall feel, even when Christ is preached of envy or strife, in harmony with him who said-- “What then? Notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached, and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.” We will all rejoice to see and to hear of those who testify the gospel of the grace of God. They may not belong to our church, but we will rejoice. They may not acknowledge our church, but we will rejoice. They may not subscribe to the letter of our particular creed, but we will rejoice. They may have manifest errors and failings, but we will rejoice. The gospel of the grace of God is good news by whomsoever preached. The gospel of the grace of God is the power of God unto salvation, although in

its proclamation there be an admixture of doubtful and evil feeling. Yes--whenever we hear that the gospel is preached, we will say, God bless the preacher, and make the message mighty unto salvation; while for all ministers we will further pray that they may be like him who said, "Neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." -- SAMUEL MARTIN.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

### OF THE VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS.

YOU have noticed the gap or break in your Bibles between the Old and New testaments, as we are in the habit of calling them. There is an end, and often the insertion of something not belonging to Scripture, and then another title-page. But this space between them does not mean that the two Testaments are really two books, for the second is only the continuing and filling up of the first. The whole Bible is but one book -- God's book, connected in all its parts, from Genesis to Revelation. Yet the division between

the old and new volumes is not improper or unfitting; for it marks a great step in advance, from expecting and prayer to seeing and praise. It may be looked on, also, as serving to note a time when there was no prophet, like David and Isaiah and Ezekiel and Malachi, sent to Israel. For some hundreds of years after the last of these wrote his book, there was no seer coming to the people with messages from God which were to have a place in the holy writings. The Jews had their priests and their rulers, but the prophets appeared to have passed away.

But when this period had lasted, as I have said, for some hundreds of years, a general hope of seeing a messenger from God again began to grow up. Two things mainly helped to bring this about: -- Long, long before, God had said to Moses he would raise up a prophet from among the people who should be like Moses himself, and whom all should be bound to hear; and good people had not forgotten the great promise. The other thing was this: Malachi, the last inspired man who had spoken and written divine messages, had said that the Lord would send his messenger before him, to make his way ready for coming suddenly to visit and cleanse his temple. Malachi had even called this messenger by the name of Elijah the prophet so that many looked for him to come back from heaven to see and speak to them. From both these things it came about that there was a strong hope among the Jews that God would soon

send them prophets once more, and that one of these would be the Messiah, or Christ himself. The hope was wonderfully fulfilled. God sent them his own Son, and raised a great prophet to go before him, to say that he was coming, and to point him out when come. I am now to tell you of this forerunner of the Saviour, whom we usually name John the Baptist.

A very singular thing happened before John was born. His father was a priest, and his mother was also descended from Aaron. They were both aged people, and had no hopes of having a little child to love and train in their old age. But they were holy persons, living a life very pleasing to God, and God was pleased to prepare for them a great honour and joy. So one day when Zacharias, the priest I speak of, was attending at the temple in the time of service appointed for the course or set of priests to which he belonged, it came to be his duty to go into the holy place and burn incense upon the golden altar there. The people stayed without in the meantime, praying. After a while they began to wonder that he was not coming out; they were even anxious and afraid, not knowing what might have happened to him. At last he came out, but what was their surprise to see that he could only make signs to them with his hand, like one that was not able to speak. The truth was that he had become dumb. For as he went near to the altar, he saw a bright angel standing on the right side of it, and fell a trembling

with fear. The angel, however, spoke cheeringly to him, called him by name, and told him that his prayer was heard, and that a son would be born to him who should grow up to be a great man, and make many people glad. He said, further, that his name was to be called John, which means “given by God,” and that he would be filled with the Holy Spirit from the very first, and go before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elijah; which was the reason, no doubt, why Malachi called him by Elijah’s name. Now, when Zacharias heard this message he should have believed it at once, because it had come from God; but instead of that, remembering that he and his wife Elizabeth were so old, he did not think the thing could be possible, and made objection to it, as if it were beyond the power of God. The angel then told him that he was Gabriel, who had the honour of standing in God’s presence, and that he had been expressly sent to him to carry these glad news. But since he had been slow to believe them, he said that God would give him a painful sign to correct his fault, and till the promised child should be born he should continue dumb, and not able to speak at all. No sooner was the angels word spoken than it came to pass as he said; and so when Zacharias came out, the people saw that he had met with some wonderful vision in the temple, for he could only wave his hand to them, without saying a word.

A number of months afterwards his unbelief was put altogether to shame, and changed to joy and praise. A little son was born in his house, and when the friends and neighbours came to see the child, and to wish his father and mother joy over him, and to have him dedicated to the Lord, as is done now when infants are baptized, they said his name they supposed would be the same as his father's. But Zacharias had told his wife Elizabeth what the angel Gabriel had said his name was to be, and she told her friends that he was to be called John. The friends said that was a name which none of his relations bore, but the mother kept firm to her statement. Then they turned to his father and asked him what he would like his child's name to be. Now Zacharias was still unable to speak, and as you may have seen dumb boys and girls do, he had to write his answer, and it was this--His name is John. But so soon as he had done this, showing that he was now obedient to what God had said to him by Gabriel, he was no longer dumb, but broke out into a beautiful song of praise to God, to the wonder and delight of all that heard him. You may be sure, too, that there was great talk about what had taken place, and that people said John would certainly grow up an extraordinary child.

So he did. The grace of God was on him from his very earliest childhood, and he grew up good and wise and brave. His parents lived in the hill country of Judea, south from



Jerusalem, and not far from the wilderness. While he was young he stayed in his father's house; and no doubt his mother was careful to teach him out of the scriptures. I wonder if he was specially fond of hearing about Elijah the prophet, whom he himself was to be like. I think he would much like to hear the story of Moses, also. We know from what he himself said afterwards, that he came to learn what Isaiah wrote about his coming and his work. When he grew older he went away a great deal by himself into the deserts, and was not much seen. God was teaching him in his own great school, and making him ready for the task he had to do. Many years of prayer and meditation were thus spent by him in the lonely wilderness.

When he was about thirty years old, the time had come for his appearing before the people. So he began to preach in the country bordering on the Jordan, and the people who heard him said that never since far back times had such a preacher been heard. He spoke solemnly and awfully about sin, and called upon the people to repent. He told them that now was the time to turn from their evil ways; for God was about to set up the reign of heaven upon the earth, and they ought to get ready for his coming. Many who heard him were pierced to the heart, and confessed to him that they had been all wrong and guilty, and were baptized by him in Jordan, and told to go and do that which was right and good, to show that their repentance was true. The news of

his appearing spread far and wide through the land, and great crowds flocked to see and hear him. When they came and saw a singular person as to his dress and way of life, for he was content with locusts and wild honey for his food; he had long hair like the Nazarites; and a rough long garment of camel's hair, bound round him with a girdle of skin, was the dress he wore. But his preaching stirred the hearts of his hearers, "as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind." The very Pharisees, who were so proud and righteous in their own eyes, and the Sadducees, who were so cold and unbelieving, could not help coming to hear a man of whom every one was talking. Then people began to think he might be the Messiah himself, that was to be their great king; but when John was asked about it, he said, "No, no; I am not the Christ. I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord." He meant he was the person prophesied of by Isaiah to come before the Divine Saviour, and tell people to get ready for him, for he would soon appear. Another John said of him, "He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light." How he did so, when Jesus Christ appeared, and what became of him afterwards, so that the voice in the wilderness ceased to cry, must be told in another story.

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. What other word, found in scripture, might be used in the title pages of the Bible, instead of Testament?
2. Can you find the passage where God promised to raise up a prophet like Moses, whom all the people should be bound to hear?
3. Do you remember when and where God the Father commanded men to hear Jesus Christ?
4. Do you know a passage in which Jesus Christ expressly says that John the Baptist was the Elijah that was to come?
5. Can you name two people well known in the Old Testament, who had a son in their old age?
6. What was the furniture of the holy place? And what was in the holiest of all?
7. Do we read anywhere about the angel Gabriel appearing to some one else than Zacharias?
8. Do you remember any other persons besides Zacharias that were reproved by God for not believing his word?
9. Do you recollect the name of a child that was taught to know the holy scriptures by his pious mother?
10. Can you find the passage where the law of the Nazarites is recorded?

ANSWERS to the foregoing questions may be found by consulting Heb. viii.; Deut. xviii.; Matt., xvii.; Matt. xi.; Gen. xxi.; Heb. ix.; Dan. ix.; Gen. xviii.; Numb. xx.; 1 Tim. i.; Num. vi.

-----

### *Prayer.*

OUR Father, Thou hast promised by the word of Jesus Christ our Lord to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him. Thou art able to give the Spirit to even little children, so that they shall bear those sweet fruits of grace which come from Him. We beseech Thee to grant us Thy Holy Spirit, to make our hearts new, and to dwell in them, and teach us to be meek and gentle, and loving and true, and like Jesus. We ask Thee to pour out Thy Spirit on the church, and upon all flesh. Raise up by Thy wisdom men filled with the Holy Ghost, to do the work needing to be done at home and abroad, in order to the full coming of Christ's kingdom. Bless all ministers of the gospel; all teachers of the young; all missionaries, in our own and other lands. Turn sinners from the error of their ways, and cause thine own children to grow in grace. Bless our fathers and mothers, and make us attentive to what they tell us of Thy holy word. May every child in the world have a Bible soon, and love it. All we ask is for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

-----  
EVENING WORSHIP.

GOD of love, who willeth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from the wickedness which he hath committed and live, grant unto us ever a true sense of sin from seeing Thy holiness and love in the life and atoning death of Christ, that we may heartily repent of the same, and turning from it to Thyself, our God and Father, with a hearty repentance, may henceforth constantly serve Thee with the peace, liberty, and constancy of Thy reconciled children. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* xviii. 46-50.

“I KNOW that my Redeemer lives;”  
What rich delight this sentence gives!  
He lives, He lives, who once was dead,  
He lives my everlasting head!

He lives triumphant from the grave,  
He lives eternally to save,  
He lives all glorious in the sky,  
He lives, and fills the throne on high!

He lives to bless me with his love,  
He lives to plead for me above;  
He lives my hungry soul to feed,  
He lives, to help in time of need.

He lives to grant me rich supply,  
He lives to guide me with his eye;  
He lives to comfort me when faint,  
He lives to hear my soul's complaint.

He lives to silence all my fears,  
He lives to stop and wipe my tears;  
He lives to calm my troubled heart,  
He lives all blessings to impart.

He lives my kind and faithful friend,  
He lives, and loves me to the end;  
He lives, and, while He lives, I'll sing.  
He lives my prophet, priest and king.

He lives, and grants me daily breath,  
He lives, and I shall conquer death;  
He lives my mansion to prepare,  
He lives to bring me safely there.

He lives, all glory to his name!  
He lives my Saviour still the same:  
O the rich joy this sentence gives,  
“I know that my Redeemer lives!”

## LUKE XV.

THEN drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him. 2. And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them. 3. And he spake this parable unto them, saying, 4. What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? 5. And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. 6. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. 7. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance. 8. Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find

it? 9. And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost. 10. Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. 11. And he said, A certain man had two sons; 12. And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. 13. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. 14. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. 15. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into the fields to feed swine. 16. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. 17. And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! 18. I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father I have sinned against Heaven, and before thee, &c.

-----

*Prayer.*



OUR Father which art in heaven! Let our prayers come before Thee as incense, and the lifting up of our hands as the evening sacrifice; and that the worship we offer may be acceptable, cleanse the thought of our hearts by the ministry of Thy Holy Spirit, and connect our devotions with the Mediator, Thy dear Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Pardon, we pray, all our transgressions of Thy holy law during this day. Even in worship we not only fall short of that which is perfect, but we do that which is positively wrong. Cast all our sins behind Thy back; and hear us when we thank Thee for all the good gifts with which Thou hast favoured us to-day and for all the good works Thou hast wrought on our behalf. Thou, O merciful God, art always doing us good, and we thank Thee. We would extol Thee, O God our king, and we would bless Thy name for ever and ever. Every day would we bless Thee and praise Thy name for ever. Enable us in everything to give Thee thanks, and to present to Thee our bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable.

O Lord our God, Thou hast made a gracious provision for rest, and Thou hast also called us to labour. From slothfulness and indolence, good Lord, deliver us. If we be naturally disinclined to work or have infirmities of body which render labour difficult, we ask for grace to conquer such disinclination, and to bear bravely such infirmities. If we have formed habits of idleness, we ask Thee to break

this chain, and to set us free. Awaken in our hearts a satisfaction, and even delight, in all true and honest labour. May we all know the work Thou hast given us to do, and be found in that work diligent and persevering. Cause this to be the case with the youngest in the family so that whatever our present duty may be, we may with all our might and with all patience perform it. We pray Thee also to bless to us our daily occupations. May our daily work aid our religious life, and our religion include our common employment. Father of our spirits, we beseech Thee to grant that everyone in this house may be moved to strive to serve and to please Thee in all things, so that whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we may do all to the glory of God. Assist us also to aid each other in our several duties by having the same care one of another, and by affording mutual encouragement in our daily tasks. Help us to bear each other's burdens; and so to fulfil the law of Christ. And seeing that our Saviour pleased not Himself, move us to strive to please one another for our common good. May the true welfare and happiness of this family be our individual concern, and may we be found striving to promote this day by day. Check all manifestations of selfishness, and entirely uproot this accursed and most bitter plant. May true love be ever strong and ever fruitful in this house, springing up and bearing fruit as a plant of Thine own right-hand planting. May all the great and

glorious objects for which thou hast planted families be secured by ourselves, through Thy grace assisting us, and Thy providence watching over us. Be Thou in all respects the Father of this family. And we beseech Thee, O Lord our God, to bless all the families throughout the earth which call upon Thy name. Bless parents and children, masters and servants, and may true piety prevail in all households professing to serve Thee. And wilt Thou have mercy upon the families which do not acknowledge and serve Thee? Thou seest such in our land and near our own doors. Have mercy, we pray Thee, upon them, and grant them the knowledge of Thyself, and of Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent. Also sustain all solitary Christians in such homes, that they may be strong to bear their quiet and effective testimony against ungodliness, never loving even father or mother more than their Saviour.

Father of mercies, we ask Thee to bless all the sons of labour. Preserve those who are working in coal mines, and in other dangerous places. Watch over those who build our houses, and reap down our fields. Protect all who do business on our lakes and rivers, and in the seas which surround our native land. Bless all sorts and conditions of men in our country. Remove from labour all that is hard and unjust on the part of masters, and all that is unfaithful on the side of those who labour for others. Bless the commerce and trade, the agriculture and manufactures, of

our country; and may the sabbath-day work together with our labour-days for the good of the whole nation. And wilt Thou suffer us to commend to Thee all religious and benevolent labour? Thine eye has rested this day upon work of this character. O Lord prosper it all. Many have been striving to instruct and comfort and relieve others.

Graciously prosper the work of their hearts. And wilt thou urge to undertake such service the many who stand all the day in the vineyard idle? The harvest is plenteous, and the labourers are few; send forth, we pray Thee, labourers into the harvest. May the Spirit of all grace and might attend all Christian work with the operations of His mighty power.

We know that in all such service there is a sad admixture of bad motive and of evil spirit, rendering needful the blood of Jesus Christ Thy Son, which cleanseth from all sin. Pardon all the sins of Christian work, and prosper it with Thy benediction. Let Thy work appear unto Thy servants, and Thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish Thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it. Hear us, O God our Father, in these our confessions of sin, our thanksgivings, and our supplications, for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

*Morning.*

**I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as much as in all riches.**

Deal bountifully with thy servant, that I may live, and keep thy word.

Thy testimonies also are my delight and my counsellors.

For I delight in the law of God after the inward man.

Mine eyes fail for thy salvation, and for the word of thy righteousness

Deal with thy servant according unto thy mercy, and teach me thy statutes.

Ps. cxix. 14, 17, 24.      Rom vii. 22.      Ps. cxix. 123, 124.

*Evening.*

**Know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind.**

God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him.

Walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.

Let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me.

1 Chron. xxviii. 9.      Ps. lxxix. 7.      Col. i. 10.      Jer. ix. 24.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.**

When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;

Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins:

And by him all that believe are justified.

1 Tim. i. 15.      Mark ii. 17.      1 Tim. ii. 3, 4.      Acts xiii. 38, 39.

*Evening.*

**He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whosoever confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.**

I acknowledged my sin unto thee and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.

For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Prov. xxviii. 13.      Ps. xxxii. 5, 6.      1 John i. 8, 9.

**WEDNESDAY.**

*Morning.*

**And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh.**

And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shall give unto him the throne of his father David.

And so it was, that while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

And the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.

1 Tim. iii. 16.    Luke i. 31, 32.    Luke ii. 6, 7.    John i. 14.

*Evening.*

**I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me,  
Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.**

Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

Be wise now therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

Ps. ii. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.



## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**Herein is my Father glorified that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.**

My well-beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill.

And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a wine-press therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.

What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?

I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit.

John xv. 8.

Isa. v. 1, 2, 4.

John xv. 5.

*Evening.*

**The world, or life, or things present, or things to come; all are yours.**

He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ: if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.

1 Cor. iii. 22.      Rom. viii. 32.      Rom. viii. 16, 17.      Eph. i. 5.

## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him.**

Wherefore, I beseech you, be ye followers of me.

Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

Mark ix. 9.    1 Cor. iv. 16.    1 Cor. xi. 1.    John x. 27.    John x. 16.

*Evening.*

**Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.**

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you as of evil doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

1 Thess. v. 5. Matt. 8. 1 Pet. iii. 15, 16. Rom. xii. 1.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**My soul followeth hard after thee: thy right hand upholdeth me.**

But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord God, that I may declare all thy works.

Thou art my hiding-place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah.

I am continually with thee; thou hast holden me by my right hand.

For he clave to the Lord, and departed not from following him, but kept his commandments.

Ps. lxiii. 8. Ps. lxxiii. 28. Ps. xxxii. 7. Ps. lxxiii. 23. 2 Kings xviii. 6.

*Evening.*

**The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance.**

Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord, and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep anger for ever.

Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding; whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.

So foolish was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee.

Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about.

Rom. ii. 4. Jer. iii. 12. Ps xxxii. 9. Ps. lxxiii. 22. Ps. xxvii. 10.

# HOME PREACHER, OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

TWENTY-SECOND WEEK.

MORNING WORSHIP.

ALMIGHTY God, who by the resurrection of Thine only begotten son, Jesus Christ, hast overcome death, and opened to us the gate of everlasting life, we humbly beseech Thee, that as by Thy special grace preventing us, Thou dost put into our minds good desires, so by Thy continual help we may steadfastly set our hearts upon those things which are above, that when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we may also appear with him in glory. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm cxix.* 97-104.

IN streets and op'nings of the gates  
Where pours the busy crowd,  
Thus heav'nly Wisdom lifts her voice,  
And cries to men aloud:

How long, ye scorers of the truth,  
Scornful will ye remain?  
How long shall fools their folly love,  
And hear my words in vain?

O turn, at last at my reproof!  
And, in that happy hour,  
His bless'd effusions on your heart  
My Spirit down shall pour.  
But since so long, with earnest voice,  
To you in vain I call,  
Since all my counsels and reproofs  
Thus ineffectual fall;

The time will come, when humbled low,  
In Sorrow's evil day,  
Your voice by anguish shall be taught,  
But taught too late, to pray.

### PROVERBS I. 20-23.

WISDOM crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets: 21. She crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words,

saying, 22. How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? And the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? 23. Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.

## PROVERBS II. 1-9.

MY son, if thou wilt receive my words and hide my commandments with thee; 2. So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; 3. Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding, &c.

-----

### *Prayer.*

OUR soul waiteth for the Lord, more than they that wait for the morning; more than they that watch for the morning light, unto Thee O God, do we lift up our eyes. Every day will we praise thee, and ever bless Thy name for ever and ever. Each returning day would we offer to Thee the first tribute of our thoughts, the freshest ardour of our affections. But this is the day which the Lord hath made, which brings to us, with its hallowed light, the memories of

creating goodness and of redeeming love. To Thee, therefore, who hast made us for Thyself and unto Thyself hast redeemed us by the blood of thy dear Son, would we, on this above all days, with adoring love and gratitude lift up our hearts. O come and let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our maker; for He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand. Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto Him with psalms.

For unnumbered mercies, for blessings often unnoticed, oftener unimproved, ever undeserved, we thank Thee, O God. For our being and well-being, for the supply of our wants and the preservation of our lives, for the health of body and vigour of mind, for all the temporal blessings Thou hast bestowed and the evils Thou has averted, we bless and praise Thy holy name. But as for the blessings of Thy providence, so also would we thank Thee for the riches of Thy grace. Our souls would magnify the Lord, and our spirits would rejoice in God our Saviour. For He that is mighty hath done great things for us, and holy is His name, and His mercy is on them that fear Him from generation to generation. Hungry, Thou hast fed us with the bread of life; poor, Thou hast made us heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ; in our darkness the day-spring from on high hath visited us; in our loneliness we have been gathered into the communion of saints; burdened with guilty fears and



forebodings, Thou hast begotten us to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Alas! that for these and all Thy benefits our gratitude should be so cold and feeble; that the homage of our lips should be so often belied by the unfaithfulness and disobedience of our lives, and that, instead of dedicating ourselves to Thy service, we but too often follow only the devices and desires of our own hearts. Help us, O loving Father, no longer thus to offend Thee. Suffer us no more to wound our consciences and grieve Thy holy Spirit. Grant to us that godly sorrow which worketh repentance not to be repented of. The sins we confess enable us to renounce; the errors we deplore help us to correct. Henceforth may there be no longer so grievous inconsistency between our holy professions and our week-day work. Let not our hearts be ever again debased by worldly cares, and our purity sullied by wicked indulgences. May the high motives and holy aspirations of religion infuse a new elevation and dignity into our daily lives. May all our powers of mind and body be consecrated to the service of Him who hath redeemed us by His precious blood, and made us members of His body and temples of His holy Spirit. Let no selfishness, or covetousness, or sensuality, or ambition, or any other unhallowed passion, reign within our breasts, but let every thought of our minds, and every feeling of our hearts, and every energy and activity of our lives, be brought into captivity to the

obedience of Christ. May every period of life as it passes render us more gentle, earnest, unselfish, heavenly-minded, bring us ever in spirit and character nearer and nearer to Thee. And when the years of our brief and hurried life are ended, and the hour of our departure comes, may it find us in peace of conscience, rejoicing in Christ Jesus, in charity with all the world, and in the sure and blissful hope of a glorious immortality: all which we ask for the sake of Him who is the pledge and earnest of all Thy gifts, in whom and with whom Thou hast freely given to us all things, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O GOD, enable us to guard against misjudging whatsoever things are just, pure, lovely, or of good report, and to follow those who by deeds of faith and love have obtained the praise of Him whose judgment is ever according to truth. This we ask for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm cxix.* 33-37.

LET Christ, to whom we now belong,  
His sov'reign right assert;  
To Him we owe the grateful song,  
To Him the loving heart.

He died our safety to obtain,  
And make his grace to shine;  
O Lamb of God! was ever pain,  
Was ever love like thine!

He justly claims us for his own,  
Who bought us with a price;  
The Christian lives to Christ alone,  
To Christ alone he dies.

Jesus! thine own do Thou receive;  
Fulfil our heart's desire;  
O let us to thy glory live,  
And in thy cause expire!

Thine, wholly thine, we long to be;  
Our sacrifice receive;  
Made, and preserv'd and sav'd by Thee  
To Thee ourselves we give.

## MATTHEW XXVI. 1-13.

And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples, 2. Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified. 3. Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, 4. And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill him. 5. But they said, not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people. 6. Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, 7. There came unto him a woman having an alabaster-box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat. 8. But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste? 9. For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor. 10. When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? For she hath wrought a good work upon me. 11. For ye have the poor always with you: but me ye have not always. 12. For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial. 13. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.

-----

## SERMON XXII.

“AND BEING IN BETHANY IN THE HOUSE OF SIMON THE LEPER,  
AS HE SAT AT MEAT, THERE CAME A WOMAN HAVING AN  
ALABASTER BOX OF OINTMENT OF SPIKENARD, VERY  
PRECIOUS, &c.” -- Mark xiv. 3-9.

AMONGST the incidents which marked the close of Christ's earthly history, there is none more touching or suggestive than that which the Evangelist thus narrates. We have here a noble and beautiful action rescued from detraction, and consigned by One, from whose judgment there is no appeal, to immortal honour. And you will notice with what exquisite delicacy our Lord here balances censure with commendation, sets honour over against detraction. “There were some that had indignation,” it is said, “within themselves,” when the woman, in her lavishness of devotion, poured forth the rare perfume on the head of Him she so loved and honoured. “Nay” is the burthen of the Saviour's reply, “condemn her not; this very deed which in your narrowness and coldness ye censure, shall go down to unborn ages, and be the theme of praise to countless tongues. Wheresoever this gospel is preached, this that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.” Or, again, did the censurers regard her action as that of a mere thoughtless, unmeaning prodigality? “Why was this waste

of the ointment made? It might have been sold for so much and given to the poor!” “Nay,” is the Saviour’s reproof, “her deed is neither meaningless nor profuse:” not meaningless, for she has in this, her strange demeanor, a deeper meaning than meets the common eye. She has in her heart a love which yearns for expression, and yet which transcends the power of mere uttered language to express; and the only way she can find to give vent to her irrepressible emotion is to declare it thus. All she can do is to symbolize it, to pour forth as if her very soul in the precious ointment with which she besprinkles her Lord’s head, and to feel the incense of her gratitude, with the fragrance of the perfume, floating forth on the very air He breathes. She hath done what she could to express her affection.” Nor, our Lord teaches them, is her act to be regarded as profuse and wasteful any more than unmeaning. For the precious material she so lavishly expended might indeed have been turned into money, or into meat and drink and clothes, and so, as her censurers suggested, have been given to the poor. But in so conceiving of it, they applied to an act of beauty a mere utilitarian standard; they would fain test by the criterion of material utility a deed belonging to a far higher and nobler order of things. As well might they have sought to weigh love in scales, or measure thought by rule and compass, or try to detect the presence of moral evil by a chemical test,

as judge by a money standard an act of most delicate spiritual nobleness. As well might they have looked on the summer fields and asked to what purpose this waste in the growth of lily and rose! Might not all this fertility of nature, instead of running to waste on useless flowers, have gone to grow provender for cattle or food for man? As well so have questioned as have asked, in their gross irrelevancy of thought and feeling, "Might not" the material wasted on this act "have been sold for three hundred pence?" -- might not this beauty have been turned into hard cash, "and given to the poor?" Yes, it might have been, but the world had been no gainer by the exchange. The bodies of a few hungry men might have been fed with bread, but an act had never been done which has fed, age after age, countless hearts with the inspiration of nobleness and self-devotion and love. Saved and turned into money, the means of a slight dole of alms might have been gained; but there had been irrecoverably lost the opportunity for an act of touching pathos of almost prophetic tenderness to the dying Redeemer of the world. "For," said the Lord to the utilitarians of Bethany, "the poor ye have with you always, but me ye have not always .... She is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying."

We have here, then, exception taken to a noble act of Christian feeling and devotion, and our Lord's defence of it:

from which defence three thoughts, with reference to acts of which this woman's is the type, suggest themselves, viz.:-

I. *The immortal honour that attends them.*

II. *Their symbolic power of expression.*

III. *The non-utilitarian standard by which they are to be measured.*

I. Condemned by other observers, this woman's action was *consigned to immortality* by Jesus.

"Wherever," said He, "this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her." Though not the motive, yet it constituted one element in the reward of her act of simple devotion to her Lord, that it should be had in undying remembrance, and that her name should go down to future ages linked with the name of Him she revered and loved. Not many names, amidst the myriads who have lived and died on this earth, have survived in the world's remembrance. Of the deeds which men have done in the past, how few are those which still live in history! But amidst that bright galaxy of men renowned for the great words they have spoken or the noble deeds they have done -- poets, philosophers, statesmen, warriors, philanthropists, heroes, martyrs -- amidst the world's noblest who have made this earth illustrious by their presence, and who shine as the stars for ever, how strange to reflect that the only one to whom inspiration has assigned a place is this simple



villager of Bethany; and that the one act to which undying fame is promised is not an achievement of genius, or power, or heroism; no production even of inspired intelligence, or daring, or devotion; no glorious poet's song, or warrior's victory, or martyr's death; but a simple insignificant tribute of affection offered to her Lord by a lowly woman at a village feast. She aspired not to greatness; she dreamt not of fame; but there, on the firmament of glory, next to that bright and morning star, her pure light in unobtrusive beauty shall shine for ever. To have her name united in honour to the name of Jesus was a destiny to which her humble spirit, in its highest visions of happiness, could never have soared; yet, as the sculptor of old engraved his own name indelibly on the marble of which the statue was fashioned, so that that must perish ere he could be forgotten, so, though by no presumptuous act of hers, this her deed of love has graven her name, as with a pen of iron, on the rock for ever, in that gospel which is her Lord's everlasting memorial.

And yet it may be said, of what avail to her is all this fame and honour? Of what avail to any man is posthumous fame? Satire has often aimed its keenest invectives against the desire of posthumous fame, and in one view of the matter not unwisely or unjustly. "What's fame?" exclaims the moralist:"

“A fancied life in others’ breath,  
A thing beyond us even before our death  
Just what you hear, you have, and what’s  
unknown,  
The same to you if others’ or your own.”

Strange illusion surely it is, when men throw away life to acquire after death a renown which they can no longer enjoy--when their imagination anticipates a fame they shall never know, and the applauses they are never to hear ring in their ears and prompt them to the sacrifice of present ease and enjoyment. What shall it matter to you, whether you are remembered or forgotten, execrated or applauded, when of neither praise nor censure can you any more be conscious--when you are for ever beyond the reach of the world’s honour or the world’s malice? What worse than childish folly to waste thought and energy in the pursuit of that honour which is to be won only when the ear is deaf to the voice of applause and the pulse of ambition is stilled for ever! And so, was it not, after all, a boon of little worth, which in this promise the Lord conferred on his humble follower? Gone for ever from the world, does it not seem as if it would affect her just as little to be set, like Judas, as the mark of the world’s undying scorn and abhorrence, as to cherished and honoured for ever as the loved and loving friend of Jesus!

Now, though there may be some ground for that view of the matter, which makes the absurdity of the desire of posthumous fame one of the stock moralities of ethical writers yet, as we might well infer from its forming the subject of an express promise of our Lord, it must be not altogether an unworthy or unchristian object of desire; it must, at any rate, be no despicable result of noble acting, to be cherished in men's remembrances when we are gone, and to have that "which we have done spoken of for a memorial of us."

And of this a moment's reflection will convince us. It is, indeed, unquestionable that fame, applause, glory, the honour that cometh from men, can never, considered in itself, be a legitimate object of a Christian's desire. To interpret the words of our Lord as implying or inculcating such a notion, would be to set them in direct contradiction to other passages of Scripture--as where those are condemned who "do their works to be seen of men," "who love the praise of men more than the praise of God," who "seek the honour that cometh from man, and not the honour that cometh from God only." No! The first aim of a Christian is not to *appear*, but to *be* right, not to gain the *honour* of nobleness and goodness, but to *be*, through Christ's grace, noble and true and good. Reality, not seeming; goodness, not glory, sincerity before God, not

show or semblance, however imposing before the eye of man--this is what a Christian seeks. His love for Christ, and devotion to the will of God, should ever be such as that he would do the right, not only though in doing right he be unknown and unhonoured, but though it expose him to dishonour and infamy. Who can doubt that obscure goodness is infinitely preferable to illustrious sin? If the two are incompatible, could a Christian hesitate for a moment to sacrifice the love and honour and respect that make life sweet and death less bitter--to tear from his heart the most cherished hope and wish, rather than wound conscience or tamper with truth and holiness? Would it be a light thing, in reason's eye, to gain immortality of renown at the expense of one untrue word? Or to be hooted and hounded out of the world with scorn and shame, and consigned to eternal infamy amongst men--would not this be a fate, however terrible, from which a wise man should not shrink, if only thus could he keep true to Christ! Of what avail the acclamations of a world he has left behind, to the soul that is trembling in dismay beneath the frown of God? Or can it alleviate one pang of a lost spirit's agony, that the far distant scene of its former life is ringing with its praises at that very moment when it is stretched on the rack of Jehovah's wrath? Nay, better one smile of God, than a world's hallelujahs; more appalling

one shadow darkening the brow of Infinite Justice, than to be for ever execrated by the whole race of men.

But all this admitted, it is yet not the less true, that, though not the motive of a Christian's actions, it is a most noble result, a glorious reward of them, when a good and holy man's memory is embalmed in the affections of mankind. To dwell with God is the chief desire, but who that knows what it is to love and to be loved would not wish to be remembered, when he is gone, by those who were dear to him on earth? If the memory of the sainted dead be dear to us who survive them; if there be homes where the loved and lost still, in the sacredness of an undying affection, may be said to live; if there be scenes which are haunted and hallowed by an invisible presence, where the dear old voices seem sometimes to fall sadly and sweetly on the ear, and we name softly and reverently the household names of those whom God hath taken--is it not natural that we, in our turn, should wish so to be remembered? It is a natural, and by no means an unchristian feeling that makes us cling to old scenes and friends the longer we live; that makes it sad for a man of strong affections, as the end approaches, to think that the hour is coming when on all he loves and has cherished so long he shall look his last--that in a few brief months his step shall fall no more on the old path or the familiar threshold, and that on these dear faces he shall never, never, in all the ages, look again. And so it is

something to be told, that like this woman, we shall still in memory survive, and that our name and our deeds shall live on loving lips. We seem to ourselves to gain thus, even on earth, some triumph over death--to enlarge and prolong existence in the hearts of those who shall never cease to love us. And if we extend the same thought to others beyond the circle of our immediate friends, surely to a man of large and expansive Christian spirit it must be a thought unspeakably delightful, that some word he has spoken, or deed he has done, shall survive, age after age, to enkindle holy ardour in many a mind, and to prompt to deeds of Christian nobleness while the world endures.

And who can tell of what incalculable results each Christian act, a word spoken in season, an act of noble truthfulness, or tenderness, or self-sacrifice, may be the seed? Who can trace the innumerable lines of influence along which a Christian's example may be propagated? What mind can embrace the calculation of all the possibilities of good, on through age after age, down the evergrowing future, which may spring from one holy Christian life? And if earthly greatness has sometimes caught inspiration to deeds of heroism from the dream of posthumous fame, if it fired the poet's heart, old, blind, and poor, to think that he was writing words which the world would not let die, or if the dying warrior has ever found strange consolation in the thought of his country's

gratitude, a name in her annals and a sepulchre among her heroes, surely to a Christian heart not less dear should be the thought, nor less inspiring to holy deeds in Christ's service, that the good we do shall live after us; that our example, if not our name, shall survive us; that our influence at least shall be associated with all that is holiest and purest and noblest on earth, even if it may not be said of us literally as of this woman, "That wheresoever this gospel is preached this which she hath done shall be told for a memorial of her."

II. The second view of this woman's action to which I propose to direct your attention is its *silent, symbolic, power of expression*. She had in her heart feelings which craved for outward expression, and yet which, in their intensity and illimitableness, transcended the power of mere words to express. And so she did what she could. As always, in such states of mind, feeling clothed itself in the form of imagery of symbol, and she gave vent to her emotion in the expressive act here narrated. And a moment's reflection will teach us how exquisitely true to nature, and so how fraught with instruction in this respect, the narrative before us is. For are we not all conscious often of the states of mind, of thoughts and feelings, which it is impossible adequately to express in words; and if we try so to express them, we find that we have miserably failed? The attempt to convey by words to others all that is in our hearts is often

vain, not simply from our imperfect command of language, with all its compass, copiousness, flexibility, as a medium of expression for our internal experiences. And so, when language fails us--when either from intensity of feeling we have not the heart to speak, or when we try, and feel it to be all in vain--we involuntarily betake ourselves to that other mode of telling forth our soul, the silent mode of sign, of symbolic look or act. The word "joy" is but a poor, cold vocable, that conveys to the outward ear no meaning, save as the auditor already knows the emotion for which it conventionally stands. But who fails at once to see what is meant by a smile or look of delight beaming on the countenance, or to know what the feeling is that tells itself out in a merry laugh ringing from the lip? The word "sorrow" is not like the thing it represents, and any other word, if men agreed upon it, would serve as well. But who mistakes the meaning of the trembling lip and tearful eye? And when in deep grief the sufferer's lip is dumb with an anguish which cannot shape itself into words, the blank look of unutterable sorrow may be stamped, in language far more expressive than the tongue could utter, on every lineament and motion of the face and form. Hours would be insufficient to describe emotions that may be conveyed by a glance, and in a moment of high-wrought feeling there may be concentrated into a single look what the most eloquent observer could not exhaust in the longest verbal delineation.



“And the Lord turned and looked upon Peter.” Imagine yourself present at that scene and conceive that it had been yours to witness that look, to behold that face, with all its majestic purity, its awfulness, its gentleness, its unearthly sorrow and tenderness, turned upon the wretched disciple when that cruel word of thrice-spoken falsehood had just crossed his lip. Do you think that the most eloquent tongue might not weary itself in the endeavour, by all forms of uttered speech, to convey all the mingled sorrow and love, the reproachful pity, the lofty scorn of baseness, yet unwearied forbearance and love to the base, the more than kingly dignity, yet also more than womanly tenderness, which that one glance of Jesus expressed?

And in the same way with symbolic actions, such as that of the text. The beauty of such actions lies in this, that they condense into a moment thoughts and feelings which it would require a long and elaborate description verbally to portray, and which even then would be but faintly and inadequately expressed. Take, for instance, one most touching incident in the history of David. As he lay, we are told, worn and faint in a mountain cave, there came on the warrior an irrepressible longing for a draught of water from the well of Bethlehem; and though his longing seemed vain and foolish, for the foe lay encamped between him and the fountain of whose streams he had so often drunk, he could not refrain from giving vent in words to the craving, “Oh

that one would give me to drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem that is by the gate!" There were those around him who loved their chief so dearly that they were ready to imperil their life for the gratifying of his slightest wish. And without a word, caring not for the dangers to which for so slight an end they exposed themselves, "three mighty men" fought their way through the host of the Philistines, and brought back to him who was dearer to them than life that for which he craved. But we are told the king, when he received it, would not drink that draught which at such cost had been gained, "but poured it out unto the Lord," saying, "Be it far from me, O Lord, that I should do this; is not this the blood of men that went in jeopardy of their lives?" What wantonness, what worse than childish fickleness, are we not at first tempted to exclaim, is here! To what purpose this waste of that for which such a price has been paid? What gross ingratitude in return for heroic devotion. Nay, it was far otherwise. For is there not more in this action than meets the eye? As we try to fathom and express its meaning, do we not begin to perceive what a world of unexpressed feeling of lofty thought and nobleness, and generosity and piety, is involved in it. This simple draught of water, so procured, is to David's eye the type of that which is most noble in humanity, of love and faith and courage and self-sacrifice; it is an offering not fit for such as he, too great for mortal to receive. To God alone is it meet

to be offered up. And so, in kingly humility, in unselfish piety, he pours it out to Him to whom life and love and all that is noblest in man are due. This, and infinitely more than this, is involved in that simple act. What long-drawn words would be required to unfold all its expressiveness!

Precisely analogous is the case brought before us in the text. This woman owed herself, and all that made life dear to her, to Jesus. His mysterious hints of a dark doom that was at hand, told her that from that dear Lord she soon must part. Love and faith and self-devotion, boundless tenderness and sorrow struggling in her heart, she was conscious of feelings that craved for expression, and yet which, in their intensity and illimitableness, transcended the power of words to express. She could not speak, but she did what she could. Spontaneously feeling clothed itself in a form that was its own. The affection, the self-surrender, the yielding up of all that was precious, the yearning to pour forth as if her very being in the service of this all-glorious One--this, and infinitely more than this, of which she herself was unconscious, she involuntarily shadowed forth in the breaking of the vessel and the pouring forth of its precious deposit on the head of Jesus.

And He to whom the offering was made discerned a meaning in her simple act, which words had been poor to tell. Happy we, let me add, if in our symbolic acts our Lord can discern the same spirit of love and faith and

self-devotion. Our holy communion service, for instance, might, in one view of it, seem as the woman's act seemed to the unsympathizing spectators, a mere meaningless work, or a waste of substantial food on empty ceremonial. The material of our holy offering, too, might be sold for so much, and given to the poor. But not useless or unmeaning will it be, if, like hers, it be to many a devout spirit the medium of holiest thought and feeling. As we assemble at our simple communion feast, there will come amidst us the same divine guest who sat at that humble board at Bethany. Here, too, to the Lord's side many a Mary-like spirit may repair, to hallow and ennoble these poor earthly elements, by that which to Him who reads all hearts they silently, yet so touchingly, express. Happy we, if, as we break the bread and drink the wine, we feel our Saviour near; and by this our simple act, tell forth a love, a trust, a high resolve and holy aspiration, a boundless affection and self-surrender, such as that which through her offering breathed. Then will the odour of a more precious ointment, a fragrance sweeter far than this earth's rare incense, fill the house. And of us, too, will our gracious loving Lord declare--  
"They have wrought a good work on me."

III. The last point to be now considered is the *unworldly or unmaterial standard by which the woman's action is to be estimated*. To her censurers it seemed an act of unmeaning prodigality. They saw in it only a resultless

expenditure of what might have been turned to substantial material uses. If there was to be such expense incurred why not get some substantial result for it? Why not, instead of wasting the costly essence on the empty air turn it into hard cash and buy meat and drink and clothing with it for the poor? “Why was this waste of the ointment made? For it might have been sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor.”

Now our Lord’s reply condemns this view of the woman’s action as false and shallow. There was no real waste in its seeming profusion. It was a good and noble action, and it was made to appear otherwise only by the application to it of a narrow and fallacious standard. In conceiving of it as they did, they apply to an act of beauty a mere utilitarian measure, and would fain test a deed of spiritual nobleness by a criterion which had no relation to the order of things to which it belonged.

Now, the error which these superficial censors committed is one which in principle lies at the root of many of our false judgment, both in matters secular and in matters spiritual -- the error, viz., of reversing the order of importance, and judging of that which is the end as if it were only the means. There are some things, which, according to the nature which God has given us, we admire and love as ends, others which we come to admire and love in a secondary way as contributing to those ends. The

latter may be compared to the ladder by which we climb, useful only because it helps us up; the former to the object we wish to reach. The one is as the road which leads homeward, or the carriage in which we travel, valued only because of the facility and speed with which they enable us to reach our journey's end; the other is as that desired end itself valued for itself, as our ultimate destination.

Now the error into which, even in secular things, we are very apt to fall, and which in spiritual things may be described as the essential spirit of irreligion, is that, either of stopping short at the means, and prizing them as if they were ends in themselves, or of absolutely reversing the right order, and valuing the ends only as means, while we elevate the means to the place of honour, as ends. To take one of the grossest examples of this error, money, which is obviously only a means to the attainment of something else, may become an ultimate object of desire, in and for itself. It is of course beyond dispute, that money were mere dross if it did not stand for food and raiment, and shelter and comfort; if it were not the conventional representative of innumerable objects of desire, which it is the means of procuring. But it is also notorious, that men often begin to like money as an end, to drop out of sight all that can be got by means of it, and to seek to accumulate it with a more and more intense desire only for its own sake. Nay, sometimes the diseased craving goes to such a height, that everything

which money can procure, all that renders money valuable, will be sacrificed for the sake of money's worth, for the sake of money's self. And the insane standard by which such an one measures all things, the question by which every action is to be decided, is, "How much money will it save or spend?" Plead with him the cause of religion or charity, set before him some noble end of patriotism, of social or national honour, of intellectual or moral worth--his only answer is, "to what purpose this waste?" Nay, visit the home where the miserly wretch is denying himself and his family the common comforts of life, wholesome food and warm clothing; self is dearer to him than these, and still his answer is, "To what purpose this waste?"

Another and more common, though less palpable example of the same error, is the false estimate of the value of knowledge. There is a constant tendency to degrade knowledge from the position of an end to that of means, to value it only in so far as it contributes to practical uses, and to regard the time and money expended on those kinds of knowledge which cannot be turned to practical account as to so much sheer waste. It is undoubtedly true, that knowledge is useful as the means towards a thousand valuable ends. But it is also true that there are few of the things which knowledge can enable us to get--money, food, sensual gratification, social position and rank, fame, honour, and the like--which are more worth having than knowledge

itself; and to say that the time spent in filling the mind with any kind of knowledge, which cannot help a man to make money and get on in life, is wasted, is to say that money, and getting on in life, are higher and better things than knowledge.

Of what use are learning and scholarship? Why let a son waste precious years in mastering dead languages, or studying philosophy, or cultivating a taste for poetry and art, when he is intended not to be a clergyman or an author, but a practical man of business? These things won't help him on in life! All the scholarship on earth won't make him a better judge of dry goods. The learning of Porson or Bentley would not help him a bit in speculation on cotton, or an investment in bank or railway stock. The youth must push his fortune as a manufacturer, or merchant, or engineer--what will all the poetry and metaphysics in the world do to help him here? No! let the few years he has to spend on education be devoted to the practical branches; let him learn to write a good hand, be ready at accounts, acquire, if need be, a knowledge of the modern languages; but that is all the learning he needs. Other kind of learning might only make him a book-worm, and at any rate, if they did not spoil him for a man of business, they are practically useless. To what purpose such waste?

Now it is, as I have said, quite true that in the business of life many kinds of knowledge are utterly useless. And if



the chief end of a man, even in this world, be to be a clever and successful man of business, to spend his time in acquiring such knowledge is sheer waste. Moreover it is also true, that forasmuch as to live is the condition of all other enjoyments, it is a very important thing for a youth to master those kinds of knowledge which are technical or professional, which will qualify him to earn his bread, and creditably to discharge the duties of his secular calling. Nor can any man be such an idiot as to despise money, or the qualifications that enable us to make it, seeing that money is the means, not of low enjoyment only, but of all sorts of enjoyment and influence, high as well as low. Yet, on the other hand, when all this is said, it leaves the broad principle unaffected that practical utility is not the test of knowledge, seeing that knowledge in itself, and for its own sake, is, to him who knows its worth, better and higher than all that can be got by means of it. All that can be gained at the very best by excluding what is called useless learning, and confining a boy to the kind of knowledge that will help him to push his fortune in life--all that at the very best can result from this is, that he makes a fortune. But a fortune is worth only what a man can enjoy out of it; and if his mind is narrow and uncultured, if he has not in youth acquired the invaluable power of conversing with the great minds of all ages, of appreciating and enjoying those things which a cultured taste and a comprehensive, broad, liberal

intelligence alone can enjoy, then is he shut out from that which gives its chief value to money and leisure. He may indeed, without this, have everything that can minister to animal and sensuous delight; but a man can't get more than a limited animal enjoyment out of his money. If he try, he is drawn back by the warning hand of physical disease; if he persist, he soon, by the endeavour after excessive sensual enjoyment, destroys the very power of enjoying. The only way in which affluence and leisure can extract more out of life is when its possessor can thereby command the means of wider intellectual happiness, when his large and liberally cultured mind can rise beyond the narrow limits of sense, and by the expansiveness, the elevation, the intensifying of existence which knowledge communicates, live, as compared with the mere moneyed man, three lives for one. It is no waste, then, to cultivate and inform the mind in youth even with what seems useless learning. It is false economy to restrict it to the narrow beat of practically convertible information. There are not a few men of business, who, even in the secular sense, have chosen for themselves and their children this better part--men who, amidst all the toil of business, manage to keep up liberal tastes, and who can escape from the feverishness and shake off the dust and soil of life's conflicts ever and anon, in converse with the great minds of ancient or modern times, of their own other countries and tongues. But no man who has ever happened

to witness the spectacle which we may have sometimes observed -- that which is presented by a man who has got on in life who has succeeded in amassing affluence, yet whose lack of culture leaves him with money but without the larger part of money's worth -- the coarse, narrow-minded, ill-informed man of small ideas and a big purse, with a plethora of wealth and a collapse of thought, at whose table our body is overfed and our intellect staved, whose walls are covered with pictures which he cannot appreciate, and shelves filled with books of which he can enjoy nothing but the gilt backs, the man of soulless, unrefined, affluence and vulgar magnificence--no man, we say, that has ever witnessed and understood such a spectacle, would be disposed, in answer to the exhortation largely and liberally to cultivate the mind, to say, "To what purpose this waste?"

But the last and most deplorable example of the reversal of the order of importance between means and end is that which relates to the highest of all ends--those of religion. Most mournful is it if, with respect to these, a man ever, either in express words, or virtually by his conduct, says, "To what purpose this waste?"

Religion, religious faith, religious acts are of those things that are their own ends, and with respect to which it is foolish, as well as wrong, to ask of what use are they? what shall we gain by them? or to what purpose this

waste?” may be an inquiry with reference to the rewards or profitable results of religion, either in the life that now is, or in that which is to come. And in both cases the same answer must be given. The value of religion does not consist in these things--not in anything out of itself--not in what it brings or gains, but in what it *is*.

There can be no question that, in so far as external advantage in this world are concerned, much that we include under the designation “religion” is utter waste. Religion is not a marketable commodity. Its duties are not only not conducive to temporal gain and advancement, but often in many ways act as a drag or hindrance in the pursuit of them. The *time* spent on religion, for instance, is so much abstracted from other occupations: a sincerely pious man will, in proportion to the earnestness of his piety, be withheld from that exclusive devotion of his best hours and energies, that unremitted self-surrender to business, which is often the indispensable condition of great success. The man whose heart is set on a heavenly reward cannot throw himself with the same intensity of desire into the pursuit of earthly honour or fame as those who have no higher end in view, to whom these things are all in all. He who is living in habitual communion with God and the things unseen, must often slacken the ardour and shorten the hours which the man who lives only for the things of time may devote--and successfully devote--to worldly industry. For

the latter objects, much of the time that is spent in prayer, meditation, holy exercises and employments, is mere waste. Moreover, the *money* devoted to religious objects, to charities, schemes of Christian usefulness--churches, Sunday schools, religious instructors, missions at home and abroad--all this is a direct abstraction from the gains which a non-religious man is permitted to retain. And, in general, whilst good conduct tends in some sort to success in life, it is yet true that that which constitutes the essence, the life and soul of religion, its internal spirit, its exercises of love and faith and aspiration, its self-denials and struggles, its inward conflicts and triumphs --has no connection with earthly advantage, and has often led to earthly ruin and loss. "We have left all and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?" was the miserable question of religious selfishness: and the answer, as we contemplate the earthly issue of many and many a Christian life; its utter lack of earthly good; its poverty, obscurity, ill-health; its family troubles, bereavements, early death--still more if we go back in history and stand by the martyr's side as he is hurried in shame and horror out of the world, the answer is-- "Nothing, worse than nothing." And we are thus unable, from his point of view, to utter one word in reply when the observer to whom this world is all in all asks, To what purpose this waste?"

But this world is not all. And the answer, which might seem a sufficient and satisfactory one to many, would be, there is not waste in all this worldly expense and loss: for the religious man will reap, for all his religious toils and sacrifices in this world, a rich recompense in the world to come. But this is an answer only less defective and fallacious than the other. For our last remark is, that religion, in so far as it is real and pure, is not a thing which is precious to a man because even of an eternal reward to which it leads, but simply because it is in itself, now and for ever, the supreme delight, the chief joy of the soul. It is true that there is a reward in store for the child of God, that there are blessings outward as well as inward awaiting him--a prize of ineffable joy and blessedness, in comparison with which this world's highest moments of rapturous delight are faint and cold; and to this coming joy and happiness the Christian, in all his efforts and sacrifices, is not forbid to look: still it is not less true that that which gives to religion its value to religious acts and exercises their preciousness, is not anything future, anything eternal. They are precious in and for themselves. He is not a true lover of this world's knowledge who loves it for itself--to whom to know truth, to bring the mind into contact with it, is all the reward he seeks. And in like manner of divine knowledge. The truth of God to the earnest and holy minded man is not precious only or chiefly because to

believe it is the means of salvation, because only by the knowledge and belief of it can he escape hell and gain heaven. If this were all, in his study of God's word the believer would be but getting up his salvation-lesson, going through the necessary drudgery for the prize of a future heaven. But to the truly spiritual man divine knowledge is its own end, the contemplation of truth its own most precious reward. To know God, to have the eye of the soul opened to the perception of infinite purity, to be brought in mind and spirit into contact with that light of the knowledge of the glory of God which is revealed in the face of Christ; this is as much the immediate delight of the eye or sweet melody the present joy of the ear. And as it is with knowledge, so it is with love. What true-hearted child ever asks of what use is it to love my father or mother? What shall I gain by all this expenditure of affection? To what end or purpose all this waste of tender words, and loving, reverential acts? Or what brother, husband, or friend ever dreamt of inquiring, why should I repair to the presence, and reciprocate the affection of him who is so dear to me? What practical future benefit shall I gain by all this expression of fondness, by all these words and acts and gifts of love: -- Would not the all-sufficient answer be: "Gain! reward! result! I seek none, dream of none. Love is its own most precious reward; the richest joy that love can confer is simply to love, to love more, to love on for ever." And so

with the divine object of a Christian's reverential love, the Father of his spirit, the Lord, Redeemer, Lover of his soul. Earth knows no sublimer emotion than that mingled awe and tenderness, reverence and affection, which breathe in the Christian's heart towards the Father in heaven. And if it be so for the loving child to cling to the father's presence, or to rest in the mother's arms, ask not of what use it is for the soul, amid the anxieties and perturbations of life, to repose in the Infinite affection, and in all doubt and sorrow, through all change and care and trouble which the changing years are bringing to rest in the everlasting arms. If earthly affection or friendship has ever known the strange bliss of a sacrifice, the sweetness of toil or sorrow or pain borne for the sake of one who is dearly loved, ask not the Christian soul why, or for what ulterior end, it gives and spends and suffers for Jesus. What practical gain shall issue from it? To what future good or reward does it tend? To what purpose this waste? Oh, cold heart! Oh, what ungenerous spirit of calculating selfishness! What reply can such questions merit? The goodly fellowship of the prophets, the glorious company of the apostles, the noble army of martyrs, the holy Church of Christ throughout all the world, with one consenting voice reply, "We count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord, for whom we have suffered the loss of all



things--rejoicing even in this that we are counted worthy to suffer for his sake.”

-- JOHN CAIRD, D.D.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

### HOW THE VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS CEASED TO CRY.

ONE day, as John the Baptist was preaching and baptizing in Jordan, a wonderful thing happened. It was drawing towards evening, and a great many people had been baptized. Then, when there was no other person applying, the Lord Jesus went up to John and asked to get baptism. Now John had not known Jesus up till now. Galilee, in which the little town of Nazareth was situated, was far north from the deserts where John had spent his time. He knew that the Messiah was coming, and that he was to go before him, bidding people get ready to see their King; but he did not personally know Christ. The Spirit, however, had said to him beforehand, that he would tell him when Jesus should come, and give him a sign to confirm the word. Just, therefore, as the Spirit, had said to Samuel of old, when young David came before him, Arise, anoint him for

this is he; so now, when Jesus stood before John, asking to be baptized, he knew from the Spirit that this was the Christ, and was at first surprised and startled that he should ask such a thing. He said, I have need to be baptized of thee, and dost thou come to me? Jesus, however, showed him that though he had no sins to confess, and needed no repentance, yet there were other good reasons why he should receive an ordinance which his Father had appointed and John yielded, and baptized him. Then happened the wonderful thing I referred to. As Jesus had come up from the water, and was kneeling in prayer, the sky above him was cleft open, as you may have seen the clouds rent, and from the opening, there came down a shape of light like a dove, and lighted on his head. At the same time a loud voice was heard out of the brightness above the sky saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. When the voice ceased, and the skies were closed, the bright dove did not go away, but remained on Christ's head. And as John and others were looking on and wondering, Jesus rose up, and eagerly left the place, journeying away to the south.

After that John went on preaching; but now he did not merely say that Christ was coming; he told the people that he had come. Weeks passed, however, and Jesus did not again appear. At length John saw him standing among the crowd as he was preaching, and he said, There is one at this moment whom you do not know, so great and good that I

am not good enough to have the honour of stooping down and untying the string of his shoe. I have come baptizing with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Ghost. A day later than that, he actually pointed him out as he was coming towards the place where John was preaching, and said, behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world. The next day, too, he sowed him expressly to two of his own disciples, and these, following Jesus, spent the rest of the day with him in the place where he was lodging, and soon after went away with him into Galilee, where he began to preach, like John, about the nearness of the kingdom of heaven.

John, however, did not stop preaching, but went on telling the people that Christ whom God had promised to send was actually come, and calling upon them to repent and to believe in him. But by and by there were not the same crowds following him. A great many people had flocked to hear Jesus, who had begun to work great miracles both in Galilee and Jerusalem. And though Jesus himself did not baptize people with his own hand--his baptism was to be with the Spirit--yet his disciples baptized a great number. Some of John's followers heard of this, and they thought it too bad that one whom he himself had baptized should draw away the people from hearing their great master, and they came to him and made a complaint against Jesus. But this gave occasion for John to bear

clear, strong witness about Jesus, and to bring out his own humble spirit. He called up to the mind of his complaining disciples that he had always told them he was not the Christ, but far far less than he, and only sent to preach about his coming. Instead, therefore, of being sorry to hear that so many were flocking to the side of Jesus, the news made him very glad. He was but the Bridegroom's friend; Jesus was the heavenly Bridegroom, and it was his joy to hear His voice, and to stand by and see Him winning the church to Himself. He knew quite well, he said, that he himself was to grow of less and less account; Jesus was to grow greater and greater. For he was the beloved Son of the Father, who had all things put into his hand.

Everything for men would turn on their treatment of Jesus; if they believed in him, they would live for ever; if they refused to believe, the wrath of God would be on them.

I have now give you something of the last words which, we are told, John spoke about Jesus. Boldly speaking ever about men's sins, whether those who heard him were rich or poor, he had said to Herod, the prince of a good part of the country, that he ought not to have married Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. Herod heard John gladly about many other things, and often took his advice; but he did not like him to speak about this sin, and Herodias was fiercely angry. So the tetrarch, as he was called, sent soldiers, and took John, and put him in prison. His

disciples, however, were not shut out from seeing him. It was at the same time a great trial to one whose life had been so free, to be locked in a prison; but he comforted himself with the thought that the King had come before whom Herod and all princes, however great, were as nothing. I think he expected to hear of some great movement, that would change the whole state of things in Palestine. But when his disciples brought word that Jesus was doing great works of mercy, and was not bringing judgments on the guilty nation, he was perplexed and disappointed; so he thought he would send him a message to remind him of the hopes of Israel. He would not have been led to do it, I believe, had he not been in prison, and made weak and weary there. As it was, perhaps he felt as if Jesus were not remembering him; and so he sent two of his disciples with this question, Art thou the Christ, or must we wait for another. It is to be noticed with great care what answer Jesus sent back. He wrought many miracles of healing in the presence of the two followers of John, and said to them, Go, tell John what you have seen and heard, and say, he is a happy man who does not feel stumbled at my working such works as these. He wanted John to think again; to look at the matter with more care, and to say what better or other work could he do, who was come to seek and to save that which was lost. I cannot doubt that John understood from the answer that Christ's healing power,

and his preaching the gospel to the poor, were the true marks of Him whom God had sent.

If John, when he sent his disciples to Jesus, had some wish or hope that Christ would come to deliver him from prison, he had his wish fulfilled ere long, though not in the way he might mean. For the doors of the prison were soon to be set open, not to let him out again to live on the earth, but to receive him up into the sky. It happened in this way. Herod's birthday came round, and he wished to keep it with great splendour. So he made a great feast for all his lords and nobles, and a very grand affair it was. Much eating and drinking there was, and everyone's heart was merry. Now, the queen had a daughter who was a very pretty dancer; and at a time when all were ready to be pleased, she came to where the king and his nobles were sitting, and danced in their presence in such a manner that the whole company were delighted. The king himself was in raptures, and when Salome had finished, he cried out, Ask anything you please; it is yours though it should be worth half my kingdom. The young woman, hearing this, slipped out of the room, and said to her mother, What shall I ask? Now is my time, said the wicked woman in her heart, and she bade her daughter ask the head of John the Baptist. So back she went to the king, and startled him by saying, Give me here John Baptist's head in a dish. Herod was very sorry; he did not mean anything like that: but then he had sworn, and

what will the lords think if he draw back from his rash word? So he sent one of his guard, and John was beheaded in the prison, his head brought to the king, and given to Salome, and carried by her away to her mother. But John himself had been carried by the angels into the palace of the King of kings, to wait for the coming of his great Lord from a still more cruel death.

-----

### QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Can you give examples of other persons besides John not wishing Christ to do what he was doing, from thinking themselves unworthy of it?
2. Can you give another instance of God's voice being heard over the heads of the people, and tell what those present thought it was?
3. Which of the Gospels speak of John the Baptist chiefly as the Forerunner, and which of them mostly as Witness?
4. What was to be the emblem of Christ's baptism of men with the Holy Ghost?
5. Can you find an instance in the Old Testament of a person displeased with a work of God's Spirit, because he thought his master was slighted?

6. What did Jesus say of John the Baptist, proving how highly he esteemed him?

7. What eminent martyrs, other than John, and after Christ, do we know of in the New Testament?

ANSWERS to the foregoing questions will be found by consulting Matt. viii. and John xiii.; John xii.; Matt. iii., Mark i., Luke iii., John i.; Matt. iii., Acts ii.; Numb. xi.; Matt. xi. and John v.; Acts vii. and xii.; 2 Tim. iv.

-----

*Prayer.*

O LORD, we thank Thee that Jesus the Lamb of God has come. We rejoice to know that His blood cleanseth from all sin. We pray to have our robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. We wonder at the wickedness of those who could murder John, and kill the just, and good, and holy Jesus; but we know that we have by nature the same sinful heart as others, and thank Thy grace which has taught us better than many. May we have, more and more, the baptism of the Holy Spirit from the hands of Jesus. And may we be prepared to follow Christ bravely, whatever may come, willing, if need should be, even to die for His sake. To Him be glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*

-----



## EVENING WORSHIP.

LORD God, merciful and gracious! mercifully look upon our infirmities, and endue us with the spirit of meekness and patience, that no evil we suffer from others may move us to do evil unto them, but that we may overcome them by doing them good. And in all our dangers and adversities, stretch forth Thy hand to help and defend us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

### HYMN, *or Psalm* cxxi.

FIRM as the earth thy gospel stands,  
My Lord, my hope, my trust;  
If I am found in Jesus' hands,  
My soul can ne'er be lost.

His honour is engaged to save  
The meanest of his sheep;  
All that his heavenly Father gave  
His hands securely keep.

Nor death, nor hell, shall e'er remove  
His fav'rites from his breast;  
The bosom of his faithful love  
Shall be their endless rest.

### MATTHEW VII. 21-27.

NOT every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23. And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. 24. Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock; 25. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. 26. And every one that heareth the sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand; 27. And the rain

descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell; and great was the fall of it.

LUKE XIV. 16-24.

THEN said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper and bade many; 17. And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. 18. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused, &c.

-----  
*Prayer.*

O THOU who art the giver of all good, yet who for the bestowment of Thy blessings, wilt be sought after by them that fear Thee, let Thy merciful ear, we beseech Thee, be open to the prayer of Thy servants; and that we may obtain our petitions, grant that we may ask those things which are agreeable to Thy holy will, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

O Thou who art very pitiful and of tender mercy, we bless Thee that Thou dost not banish us from that presence we have so often profaned, nor refusest to listen to those

prayers that have so often proved insincere, but art still more ready to hear than we to ask, and to bestow upon us more than we can desire or deserve. May Thy goodness lead us to repentance. May the sense of Thy longsuffering and forbearance fill us with sorrow for our ingratitude and disobedience. Father, we have sinned against heaven and before Thee, and are no more worthy to be called Thy children. We have forgotten Thee, who hast been ever mindful of us. We have been cold and unloving to Thee, who hast loved us with a ceaseless, unwearied affection. The warmth of Thy benignity has but too often only increased the hardness of our hearts; the greatness of Thy compassion only served to deepen the guilt of our persistence in sin. All that we have, all that we are, we owe to Thy bounty; and yet the wealth of being and of blessing Thou hast so graciously bestowed we have consumed in selfishness, or wasted in folly, and vanity, and sin. To all Thine other gifts Thou hast added a gift which comprehends, which transcends, them all. Yet alas! Thy crowning mercy hath only served to consummate our guilt; for we have rejected and despised the Son of God, we have been insensible to greatness of Thine unspeakable gift.

And yet to Thee, our loving Father, with all our sinfulness and our selfishness, we are still emboldened to come. Thy property it is always to have mercy; Thy pleasure, not to punish, but to pardon. Thou desirest not

the death of the sinner, but rather that he turn from his wickedness and live: turn us O God, from all our wickedness, that we may live. Thou wilt all men to be saved; save us O our God, for in Thy mercy is our only hope. From the sins that offend Thee, from the impenitence that provokes Thee, from the very unbelief that rejects thee, save, good Lord. From guilt which only Thou canst pardon, from impurity which only thou canst cleanse, from wretchedness which only Thou canst alleviate or remove, save us, good Lord. O God, make speed to save us: O Lord, make haste to help us. Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would we give it Thee; but we plead with Thee by an infinitely more precious sacrifice than we can offer, by Him who hath borne our sins and carried our sorrows in his own body on the tree. From the stain of sin do thou cleanse us: from the shame of sin do Thou cover us; from the dominion and power of sin, Redeemer of our souls, be pleased to deliver us. Endue us, we beseech Thee, with the mind of Christ. Bestow on us the spirit of self-sacrifice--a mind that ever contemplates first, not our own, but others' good, a heart that knows not a selfish wish, a will that bends all its inclinations and purposes to the will of God. Help us to be in thought wise and prudent, in speech incorrupt, in life and conversation pure. Bestow upon us that inward purity to which all outward things become pure; and whatsoever the lot in life which Thou hast assigned to us, help us to find in

all around us food for holy thought and helps to holy discipline. To Thee our gracious Father, to Thee our loving Saviour, we this day anew commit our way, beseeching Thee that this day and ever our minds may be illumined by Thy wisdom, our erring steps directed by Thy guiding hand. Direct us in our doubts, shelter us in our dangers, support us when we are weak; and when we stumble and fall, O do Thou raise us up again. Make us more and more fitted for Thy service while we live, more and more prepared for Thy presence when we die, granting us grace in this world, and glory everlasting in the world to come.  
*Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

*Morning.*

**For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.**

For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:

That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live.

John v. 20, 22, 23, 25.

*Evening.*

**I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:**

And whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die. Believest thou this?

And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the grave shall hear his voice,

And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of the damnation.

John xi. 25, 26.      John vi. 40.      John v. 28, 29

**TUESDAY.**

*Morning.*

**I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven.**

They shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven, to the other.

Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.

And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.

Dan. vii. 13.      Matt. xxiv. 30, 31.      Rev. i. 17.      Rev. xiv. 14.

*Evening.*

**The Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and he dead at his appearing and his kingdom.**

And before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.



Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand,  
Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom  
prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand,  
Depart from me, ye cursed, unto everlasting fire, prepared  
for the devil and his angels.

2 Tim. iv. 1.      Matt. xxv. 32, 33, 34, 41.

## WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall  
enter into the kingdom of heaven.**

And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I  
judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save  
the world.

He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath  
one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same  
shall judge him in the last day.

The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they  
shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and  
them which do iniquity,

And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be  
wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Matt. vii. 21.      John xii. 47, 48.      Luke xiii. 41, 42.

*Evening.*

**Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.**

And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed thee, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Matt. xiii. 43.    Dan. xii. 3.    Rev. ii. 10.    Rev. vii. 17.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**And again, when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.**

And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;

Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

Heb i. 6.      Rev. v. 11, 12.

*Evening.*

**Neither knoweth any man the father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.**

But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, for he knew what was in man.

And all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts.

That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ.

Matt. xi. 27.      John ii. 24.      Rev. ii. 23.      Col. ii. 2.

**FRIDAY.**

*Morning.*

**His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed.**

Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name;

That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

Ps. lxxii. 17.

Ps. cxviii. 26.

Phil. ii. 9, 10, 11.

Rom. x. 12.

*Evening.*

**Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most Mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty.**

God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

Who, being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

Being made so much better than the angels as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

Ps. xlv. 3.      Heb. i. 1, 2, 3, 4.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.**

And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.

Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

Ps. cx. 3.      John x. 28.      1 Cor. i. 8.      Phil. iii. 20, 21.

*Evening.*

**I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.**

Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

Phil. iv. 13.    Col. i. 29.    Heb. ii. 18.    Heb. vii. 25.    2 Tim. i 12.

# HOME PREACHER, OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

TWENTY-THIRD WEEK.

MORNING WORSHIP.

GOD our Father, who hast given us Thy dear Son to reveal to us in His person and life the chief end for which we were created and redeemed, grant us now a measure of Thy grace, that like Him we may be humble-minded, poor in spirit, meek and forgiving, and hunger and thirst after righteousness; that we may be merciful to the unthankful, meek and patient under difficulties, and notwithstanding manifold provocations; mourning the evil in our brother, rejoicing in his good; abhorring all envy, wrath, or malice: so that we, thus carrying about the dying of the Lord Jesus, may have his life manifested in our mortal bodies to the glory of Thy holy name. *Amen.*

-----

HYMN, *or Psalm* xvi. 5-9.

THOU only sov'reign of my heart,  
My refuge, my almighty friend;  
And can my soul from Thee depart,  
On whom alone my hopes depend?

Whither, ah! whither should I go,  
A wretched wand'rer from my Lord?  
Could this dark world of sin and woe  
One glimpse of happiness afford?

Eternal life thy words impart;  
On these my fainting spirit lives:  
Here sweeter comforts cheer my heart  
Than the whole round of nature gives.

Thy name my inmost powers adore;  
Thou art my life, my joy, my care:  
Depart from Thee! --'tis death--'tis more,  
'Tis endless ruin, deep despair!

Low at thy feet my soul would lie,  
Here safety dwells and peace divine:  
Still let me live beneath thine eye,  
For life, eternal life, is thine.



## DEUTERONOMY XXX. 9-20.

AND the Lord thy God will make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy land, for good: for the Lord will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers; 10. If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes, which are written in this book of the law, and if thou turn unto the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul. 11. For this commandment, which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off; 12. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? 13. Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it and do it? 14. But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it. 15. See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; 16 In that I command thee this day to love the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the Lord thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou

goest to possess it. 17. But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods and serve them; 18. I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it. 19. I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live.

#### PSALM CXIX. 1-8.

**BLESSED** are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. 2. Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart. 3. They also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways. 4. Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently. 5. O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes, 6. Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments 7. I will praise thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned thy righteous judgments. 8. I will keep thy statutes: O forsake me not utterly.

-----

## *Prayer.*

HOLY, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty! the whole earth is full of Thy glory. Thanks be to Thee for the revelation Thou hast given us of Thy name. Thou art Thyself, “the blessed God,” thrice blessed in Thy glory, and Thou art ready to bestow on us blessings manifold, according to our necessities and the riches of Thy grace in Jesus Christ our Lord. We plead with Thee in His name, by Thine own word, on which thou hast caused us to hope, that Thou wilt this morning bestow its rich and promised blessings upon us. Didst thou not command thy ministering servants in former times, saying, “Ye shall bless the children of Israel?” Herein we learn Thy will towards us. Didst thou not put words of blessing into their mouth and require them to say, “The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace?” And didst thou not promise, when Thy servants pronounced these benedictions, “They shall put My name upon the children of Israel, and I will bless them?” O Lord, “do as Thou hast said.” We claim to be thine Israel--Thy children. “Doubtless, Thou art our Father.” Thou didst make us, and not we ourselves; we are Thy people and the sheep of Thy pasture. “Thou hast redeemed us, O Lord God of truth.”

Therefore are we encouraged to ask for the blessings which Thou hast shown Thyself so ready to impart, and which every day we need. May we richly enjoy them throughout this day, on which through Thy grace and providence we have been permitted to enter. Bless Thou us, O Lord, and we shall be blessed indeed. Without Thy blessing, all beside is worthless and vain, Lord, bless us and keep us. We cannot keep ourselves. We accept Thy words, O Saviour, when Thou didst say to Thy disciples, “Without me ye can do nothing.” Keep us from the flesh and its sinful appetites and passions. Keep us from the world and its vanities and delusions. Keep us from its temptations, and perplexities, and unsatisfying pleasures. Keep us from Satan and wicked men. May we enjoy Thy favour and fellowship all the day. “Lift upon us the light of Thy countenance, and that shall put joy and gladness into our hearts, more than when corn and wine abound.” So may this day be spent in peace--in peace with Thee, in peace with one another and all men, in peace with ourselves. Put Thy name upon us that we may be “epistles of Christ, known and read of all men” “Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us;” and establish Thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it,” for Christ’s sake. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O THOU who art the giver of every good and perfect gift and the author of life everlasting, send Thy blessing on us, Thy servants, at this time! Sow the seed of eternal life in our hearts, and so water it by the dew of thy Holy Spirit, that whatsoever we learn profitably may be practised diligently, to Thy glory in Jesus Christ our only Mediator and Advocate. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm xxviii.* 6-9.

SAVIOUR, bless the word to all  
Quick and powerful let it prove:  
O let sinners hear thy call,  
And thy people grow in love!

What has now been spoken bless;  
Follow it with power divine;  
Give thy gospel great success;  
Thine the work, the glory thine!

Saviour, bid the world rejoice,  
Send, O! send Thy truth abroad;  
Let the nations hear Thy voice  
Hear it, and return to God.

## Zechariah IV. 1-9.

AND the angel that talked with me came again and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep, 2. And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps which are upon the top thereof: 3. And two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof. 4. So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me saying, What are these, my lord? 5. Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. 6. Then he answered and spake unto me saying, This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying Not by might, nor by power but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. 7. Who art thou, O great mountain! Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the head-stone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace, unto it. 8. Moreover, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, 9. The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you.

-----

## SERMON XXIII.

“AWAKE, O NORTH WIND, AND COME, THOU SOUTH; BLOW  
UPON MY GARDEN THAT THE SPICES THEREOF MAY FLOW  
OUT.”

--Song iv. 16.

BY the “wind,” we are, no doubt, to understand the Holy Spirit. This was one of his chosen emblems in the remarkable effusion of the day of Pentecost. The ‘north wind’ is expressive of those operations of the Spirit which agitate the soul with keen and bitter exercises on account of sin; while the “south wind” intimates the tender and soothing influences which bind up the broken heart. The “garden” is the church of God. The “spices” are the fruits and fragrance of those heavenly plants, which the good husbandman has made to grow within its sacred inclosure. And when the prayer is addressed to the Spirit to “awake and come and blow upon the garden, that the spices thereof may flow out,” the meaning is that he would visit the souls of his people with renewed and increased power, so as to invigorate their gifts and exercise their graces.

You know how pleasant it is, on the calm summer evening, to pass by the aromatic beds of the garden, and as the wind gently blows over the sweet-scented flowers to be

regaled by their fragrance. So also does the garden of the Lord send forth its rich perfume, when it is graciously visited by the out-pouring of the Spirit of the Lord.

Understanding the text according to this interpretation, it contains some important principles highly suitable for our present consideration. The following may be selected as the most prominent and appropriate--that the church is the garden of the Lord; that it is dependent for its fertility on the agency of the divine Spirit; that his influence may be expected in answer to prayer; and that when it is obtained abundant prosperity is enjoyed by the members of the church. Let us meditate on these heavenly truths, breathing the aspirations of the text -- "awake, O north wind, and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out."

I. *The church is the garden of the Lord.*--This figure is used at some length in the context. We read at the 12th verse--"A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; camphire with spikenard; spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices: a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon." There are principally three ideas here which it is important to observe--



1. The church is a "garden inclosed." It is separated from the world. It is in the world, but not of the world: it has been taken out of the world. Every member of it has been taught to see that the world lieth in the wicked one, and he must forsake its companionship and ways. He seeks another fellowship and unites himself to the people of the Lord. It is recorded of Saul, that no sooner was he truly converted to God than "he assayed to join himself to the disciples." The genuine convert is drawn to the godly by an irresistible affinity. These unite and coalesce as naturally as the separate globules of water dissolve into one another. They are "a peculiar people," and are required to maintain a position of separation from the world. It is thus they are addressed in the word of God-- "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? And what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and

daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” It is thus the church is “a garden inclosed.”

2. Again, within this inclosure are all pleasant plants. They are such as might be expected from the divine husbandman by whom they are planted and nurtured. “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.” These are in their own nature essentially excellent. They confer the highest blessedness on those who are the subjects of them. They impart proportionate benefits to all with whom they come into contact. They diffuse happiness as far as they prevail; and they reflect honour on him from whom they all spring. These are the graces of the members of the church. They are therefore addressed on the duties expected of them in this strain, “Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.” These are exotics which grace makes to grow in the garden of the Lord--exotics transplanted from the soil of heaven.

3. Once more, to secure their growth in this garden of the Lord, thus richly planted, there is provided within it “a well of living waters.” It is thus at once independent and dependent. It is independent of the world. It can live, in all that is essential to its highest interests, without it. It lives

in opposition to it. From the beginning the world has been the persecutor of the church. The Scriptures expressly warn us, “that as he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.” True vital spiritual religion usually flourishes most amid the asperities of the world, and least under the sunshine of its favour. It is thus independent. But in another view it is most dependent. Jesus saith to his people, “Without me ye can do nothing.” “As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in me.” He has therefore graciously provided to maintain this union. This is done by promoting communion with himself. He keeps his people near to him in the ordinances of his house. By the word and sacraments he maintains fellowship with them. In these he visits them with his salvation, and makes them partakers of his grace. “With joy they draw water out of the wells of salvation.” Ordinances are designed to furnish “the supply of the Spirit.” And thus, without going beyond their own sacred inclosure, they find within it, in the rich imagery of the context, “a spring shut up, a fountain sealed, a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon.”

II. This sentiment, however, will come out more fully while we now proceed, in the second place, to consider *that*

*the church is dependent for its fertility on the agency of the Divine Spirit.*

In the 32nd chapter of Isaiah there is the following prediction of gospel times, at the 13th verse, harmonizing with the figure and sentiment of the text: -- “Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briars; yea, upon all the houses of joy in the joyous city--until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruited field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest. Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field. And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.” The wilderness, on the one hand, filled with tangled weeds, the abode of noxious reptiles; the fruitful field, on the other, supplying wholesome food for man and beast; and the change effected only when “the Spirit is poured from on high”--these are the sentiments.

The same truth was about the very last which was impressively urged on the disciples by their risen Lord, immediately before his ascension. “Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high.” Think of the exercises of which they must have been the subjects during those days of anxious suspense and high expectation--how they were taught that they could not take

a single step in their divine mission until the Spirit came to guide and strengthen them!

They expected such influence from him, and therefore, under a divine direction, “when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.” Nor were they disappointed. “Suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.” These two emblems of the Spirit were no doubt expressly chosen because they were adapted to the occasion. The rushing mighty wind and the fire are the emblems of irresistible power. Who could withstand either? but specially the two combined? They were fitted, as no doubt they were intended, to impress on the early church the mighty power required for the execution of its high mission, and to teach that this power could be obtained only from the Spirit of God, and from no human source. This lesson they did earn effectually, for we are told of their ministrations, “they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming their words with signs following.” And the apostolic ministry is described by Peter, saying, “they preached the gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.”

This was the secret of the early triumphs of Christianity. The Spirit was honoured, and he honoured the

truth that was spoken in dependence upon him. Paul spoke for himself and all his fellow labourers when he said, “And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God; and I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power; that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.” It was not eloquence that did it, it was not industry, it was not courage, it was not zeal, it was not even the proclamation of truth: all these there were; but it was the Spirit of God, in and by them, that wrought on the hearts of men, and made them the willing subjects of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us carry this sentiment with us in all the ministrations of the sanctuary. Is the word read or preached? Let us remember the Spirit alone can enlighten the mind to apprehend it, or enable the heart to receive it, or bring the life under the power of it. Are the sacraments administered? Their efficacy is entirely dependent on the accompanying grace of the Spirit. Is the exercise of godly discipline demanded? To him it belongs to render it a blessing to the subject of it, and a warning to others. “Who is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So

then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.”

And this, let it be added, is true of both the commencement of religion in the soul, and of every step in its progress to consummation. The sinner is “born of the incorruptible seed of the word,” when that is quickened in the soul by the Spirit; otherwise it remains there a dead letter. Nor does it grow of itself when once life has been infused; the same energy must continue to be imparted to it to carry it to maturity. In the account of the first creation it is recorded, that “the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters.” The motion is analogous to that of the parent bird when she sits upon the eggs to which she imparts heat and vitality. It is also testified of the Spirit in creation, “Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created; and thou renewest the face of the earth.” All the tribes of animal, and all the varieties of vegetable life, are preserved and sustained by the Spirit that at first created them. The continuance of their being is as dependent on him as their commencement. So also is it with the work of his grace in the soul, which he alike begins and carries on to perfection. Behold the face of nature in the spring. The ploughshare has broken up the earth, the seed has been cast into it, and there it remains, waiting for the seasonable shower and the genial influences of the sun. Under these it will vegetate and grow. But the same influences must be continued. If at

any stage in the progress of the season they were to be withdrawn, the hopes of the husbandman must perish. So also it is in grace. The seed of the word is sown in the human mind while the truth is preached. The truth is watered by the Spirit, and the dead soul is quickened into spiritual life. But the dews of the Divine Spirit must continue to descend by night, and his showers and his sunshine must be given throughout the day. It is only then and thus we shall not be barren nor unfruitful in the work of the Lord, but bring forth, “some sixty, some seventy, and some an hundred fold.”

O! How important it is, in both the speakers and hearers of the word, that this sense of dependence on the Divine Spirit were constantly cherished. Unless it be so he shall not be sought with earnestness; but if it be so, we shall be in a condition sincerely to cry in the language of the text: “Awake, O north wind, and come thou south; blow upon my garden.” And to encourage such supplication, while we urge its necessity, let us now proceed and consider--

III. *That the effectual influence of the Spirit may be expected to accompany the word and ordinances in answer to prayer.* -- There is a very impressive and forcible expression of this truth in the 37th chapter of Ezekiel, at the beginning: -- “The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the Spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, and caused



me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry.” These bones were the emblems of souls dead in sin. The prophet proceeds, “And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest.” This was to engage his attention with the apparent difficulty and hopelessness of their being made alive. “Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. This saith the Lord God unto these bones, Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: and I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord.” The remedy proposed by God was the preaching of the word, to which he graciously annexed the promise of his blessing. The prophet therefore at once addressed himself to this duty. He says, “So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came upon them, and the skin covered them above.” Such was the result of the preached word -- attention, awakening, inquiry, and the assumption of the form and profession of religion. Notice what is added -- “But there was no breath in them.” There was the form of religion, but the power of it was wanting. What then

shall be done? “Then he said to me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God, Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live:” pray for the Holy Spirit. He did so, and the result is recorded: “So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.” It would be impossible more clearly or powerfully to illustrate and enforce the duty of seeking by prayer to obtain the influence of the spirit to render effectual the preaching of the word--the necessity of it, on the one hand, and on the other, the certainty of thus obtaining it.

The same connection between prayer and the gift of the Spirit is remarkably exhibited in the proceedings of the day of Pentecost, to which we have had occasion to make frequent reference. That was a model day, and was intended to acquaint us with the nature of the “ministrations of the spirit” which it introduced. Every thing therefore is brought out prominently, which it was necessary to have impressed on the mind of the church. Observe, then, the place that is assigned to prayer. The record is, “These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication. Prayer was universal, harmonious, and importunate. And is issued in the glorious results of the pentecostal visitation.

Nor was that a solitary example. The early church, with the freshness of its first love, abounded in prayer, and its prayers were the measures of its success. The apostles said, "We will give ourselves continually to prayer and the ministry of the word." Prayer was esteemed of no less importance than preaching in those days. In every emergency we find this was the refuge to which the church betook itself. Of one of these it is recorded, "when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost," and they spake the word of God with boldness. It was as much as to intimate that nothing could withstand the irresistible might of the Spirit poured out in answer to prayer.

The conversion of the world itself is suspended upon this exercise. This is the word of the Lord -- "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night; ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give him no rest till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth."

And there is a propriety in attaching such efficacy to prayer, which must be obvious on the slightest consideration. On the one hand, it is a becoming expression of our weakness. It is an acknowledgment that what we ask of God we can not ourselves accomplish. A sense of helplessness, of utter nothingness, and unworthiness, is that which is suited to us. It is formed a distinguishing trait in

every great man who has been efficient in his generation. Hear the language of isaiah: “woe is me, for I am undone, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell among a people of unclean lips.” The great apostle of the Gentiles said, “Of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities.” Luther said, “Here I stand; I know not what to do; Lord, help me.” This deep self-distrust is the surest precursor of mighty power and great success. If self is conquered, there is no other enemy that may not be overcome. On the other hand, while prayer is the proper expression of our weakness, it renders to God the glory that is due to his name. It is the cry of felt helplessness to him who is known to be almighty. Its spirit is well expressed in the words of the apostle, “We are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God.” It is thus we can say, “When I am weak then am I strong.” Prayer glorifies God, on whom it declares dependence, and therefore he accepts and honours it. There is thus no limit to the achievements which it may accomplish. It moves the hand that moves the universe. “Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me.” The Spirit of God is given in answer to prayer, because it is worthy of God so to confer it. It is an appeal alike to his unerring wisdom, his infinite power, his boundless mercy, and his inviolable truth. It cannot,

therefore, be made in vain. This is his name, and this his memorial to all generations, the Hearer of prayer. Let us, therefore, be quickened in this duty, and cry mightily to God for his Spirit to accompany the word, saying with the ancient church, “Awake, O north wind, and come, thou south; blow upon my garden.” And why? What is it that requires and justifies all this earnestness? It is the blessed truth which now remains to be considered, namely--

IV. *That the spices thereof may flow out.* -- The hidden flower is often discovered by the sweet scent with which it regales the passer by. The neighbouring garden may be known to be well tended, though unseen, by the reviving perfume which it diffuses all around. Then it may be said, “the spices thereof flow out.”

So also should it be with the church, which is the garden of the Lord, of whom it is written, His name is as ointment poured forth.” This is attained when its gifts and graces are such as to attract observation, and reflect the blessings of which it is the recipient. In short, it is when the church answers the purpose for which it has been organized, when it is itself blessed and becomes a blessing, when its gifts are increased, and its graces exercised, and others are brought under their holy and happy influence.

It is such a condition of the church that is thus celebrated and promised in the 87th psalm: “Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God. Of Zion it shall be said,

This and that man was born in her; and the Highest himself shall establish her. The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there: all my springs are in thee.” It would be the glory of the church to be the birthplace of the saints. There sinners would be born again. Among them would be men of renown, mighty men to do the work of the Lord in the earth, whose names would reflect honour on their profession, and their lives bequeath blessings to mankind. As one example of such a happy state of the church we may cite the record of the early church at Jerusalem, contained in the 2nd chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, at the 41st verse -- “then they that gladly received the word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostle’s doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And all that believed were together, and had all things common. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.” There truly did “the spices flow out!”

Why should it not be so still? If the church will only give the ancient invitation, “Let my beloved come into his garden and eat his pleasant fruits,” it will hear the ancient

answer, “I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse; I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honey-comb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.” Dropping the figure, let us simply inquire what those graces are in which Christ thus delights and hold communion with his people, as the results of his Spirit’s work, in answer to their prayers. They are many, and can now be only named: --

One is, an enlightened understanding. He greatly desires his people should have “the spirit of wisdom and relation in the knowledge of him; that they should know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.” His word therefore enjoins, “Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” Let the church, therefore, and every member of it, seek to advance in divine knowledge; and for this purpose call for the Spirit, who is eminently a Spirit of light.

Another kindred grace is, deep penitence before God. Wherever Christ is fully known this is an invariable result. “They shall look on me whom they have pierced, and mourn for him, as one mourneth for an only son.” As we see from what heights Jesus came, and to what depths he descended on our behalf, we cannot but smite on our breasts, and cry, “God be merciful to me a sinner.”

Yet this same knowledge will produce another effect, and call forth the liveliest exercises of faith. It is recorded of Abraham, “he was strong in faith, giving glory to God, being persuaded that what he had promised he was able also to perform.” We should exercise unshaken confidence in him, both for ourselves and others. Let us say, “I know whom I have believed; I know that my Redeemer liveth.” The more we trust him, the more we honour him. It is thus the work of the Spirit is eminently done; for our Lord himself said, “He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine and show it unto you.”

As are our knowledge and penitence and faith, so will be our holiness. Entire conformity to Christ should be our aim. “Grow up into him in all things.” Hear him saying, “As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; for it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy.” Be consistent. Walk worthy of Christ; otherwise the Spirit is grieved.

Especially self-denial is becoming in all his followers. He says, “If any man will follow me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me.” Whatever is contrary to his service and honour should be sacrificed; whatever is required for the one or the other should be cheerfully yielded.

In harmony with self-denial there should be zeal in his cause. “It is good to be zealously affected in a good thing”



And is it not a good thing when Christ's honour is at stake? when our own souls are in question? when the souls of others may be lost or saved? Surely it is not unreasonable to say, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and finish his work." The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up."

Then if so, this zeal must be proved by our generosity. "Ye know that grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." It is impossible, if the love of Christ be in our hearts, and if his honour be our aim, that we should withhold what is essential to his cause when it is in the power of our hands to do it. Rather shall we ask, "what shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits?" and our only regret will be that we do, and can do, so little for him who has done so much for us.

In the contemplation of such graces, who will not unite in the prayer of the text, "Awake, O north wind, and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out?" Unless the Spirit produce them, they will never exist in the barren heart of man. Unless he cherish them, they will not be strengthened and exercised in the believer's soul. But if he do dwell in us, and exert this mighty power upon us, then shall that influence be apparent in the increase and exercise of these very graces. O Holy Spirit, breathe on every soul now present, and quicken it

into life. May the services of the sanctuary be ever conducted under thy grace and guidance. Do thou come and possess the hearts of the ministers and members of the whole church, until they shall be be “filled with the Spirit.” May the promise speedily be fulfilled, “I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh.” And may the church with one voice be stimulated to cry, “Awake, O north wind, and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out.”

“Come, Holy Spirit, heav’nly Dove,  
With all they quickening powers,  
Kindle a flame of sacred love,  
In these cold hearts of ours;  
Come, shed abroad a Saviour’s love,  
And that shall kindle ours.”

James Morgan, D.D.

---

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

### HOW THE FIRST CHRISTIAN MARTYR DIED.

ONE day there was a great tumult in Jerusalem. A good man, who was well known and much feared as a powerful defender of the faith of the followers of Jesus Christ, had been dragged before the high court, to be tried for speaking against Moses and the law. Not that he really did so; for to preach Jesus was to show that the law had been honoured and fulfilled. Moses himself had said that a great prophet was to be raised up, whom all the people were to hear. That prophet was Jesus; and to tell the Jews about Him was only to tell what Moses had said would come to pass. This was all that was done by Stephen (for that was the good man's name), though he did teach the truth about Jesus in such a way as to show that he had come, not to be a prophet and saviour for the Jews only, but for the world. These Jews, however, who did not believe in Jesus were very angry with Stephen, for they were not able to answer him, he preached so wisely and with such power; and when

people will not believe the truth, and find they cannot reply to the one who tells them of it, they very often get angry with him instead. That was the way in which Sephen was brought before the council in Jerusalem.

His appearance before his judges was very remarkable. People who saw him said that his face shone like an angel's. Then after his accusers had brought witnesses to tell what he had been saying against Moses, the holy man began to answer for himself. His words were calm and wise and brave; but he was not allowed to close what he meant to say. He had begun by going back to the time when God called Abram from his own country, to a land which he promised to show him, and to give to his seed. He had then gone on to tell what happened to the fathers of the Jews, and showed his hearers how well he had studied their history. But when coming to the times of Solomon and of the building of the temple, he threw in a word about the Most High not dwelling in such houses as men could build, "since heaven was his throne, and earth his footstool," and he might well therefore ask "what house will ye build me, and where is the place of my rest?" -- they showed signs that they would hear him no longer. He had only, indeed, been quoting to them one of their own prophets, out of the Old Testament scriptures; but thinking they saw what he was coming to, they grew hot with rage, and would not listen. So he had to address to them some stern, true,

words of rebuke, and stop speaking. For stung to the heart by what he had said, they became quite mad, gnashing their teeth with fury, and showing that they were ready to tear him in pieces, like as many wild beasts.

I think it is likely that there were some dear friends of Stephen who were looking on with love to him, and pity, and distress, but they were not able to help him against his angry enemies. There was One, however, who was looking down on that scene from the sky, who was going to help him in a strange way. Jesus saw all that was being done; and now when rage was round about his faithful servant, and he was about to be dragged to death, he made him turn away his eyes from earth to heaven, and showed him what cheered his heart, and prepared him to meet a cruel martyrdom. For when he looked up, he saw the sky open above his head, and a bright glory shining, which told of the presence of God; and there in the midst of the glory, on God's right hand, was Jesus standing, the very Jesus for love to whom he was soon to die. When Stephen saw this sight he could not keep from telling of it, and he said, Think what I see; heaven open, and Jesus the Son of man standing on the right hand of God! No sooner had he said this than the people round, stopping their ears with their fingers or hands, as if his words were too horrid to be listened to, rushed on him, and carried him out of the town into the fields, to stone him to death. They soon carried their

purpose into execution. The witnesses against him, as the first who were to cast stones at him, stripped off their cloaks and ran eagerly to strike him down, and others followed, till he staggered under their blows, and the blood was flowing over his person. It was a cruel sight.

But it was a grand sight too, so far as Stephen was concerned. He never spoke for Christ so nobly as now he suffered for him. He must have thought much of how Christ himself died on the cross. For he did not utter a complaint, he did not say a harsh word of his very murderers, and he showed no fear of death. He knew he was going away up, to be where he had seen his Lord as if waiting to take him to himself. As they were still casting stones at him, he was heard saying: Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. After that he kneeled down upon the ground, feeling too weak even to stagger further, and closed his life by praying for the cruel men who were killing him. He had learned, you see, from Him who prayed, when he was being nailed to the cruel cross, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.

In telling how, after that, the martyr died, the Bible uses a very striking and pleasing expression. It says he fell asleep, as if he had just lain down on his bed, as if he had felt no pain, and had but dropped off into a night's sleep. But it is true that death to God's dear children is only a sleep. Their bodies not only rest in the grave, but their

souls are at rest with God, and then their bodies are to wake up in the morning. They shall rise again, to be weak and frail and weary no more. “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.”

It is not said that there were chariots of fire waiting to receive Stephen, and to carry him like Elijah up into heaven. But I have no doubt the angels were there, to do for him what Christ says they did for Lazarus. There were friends too of the martyr on the earth, who made haste to honour him. When the crowd had spent their rage, and gone home from their bloody work, those who loved Stephen gathered round the spot where he had fallen, and lifted him from the ground wet with his blood, grieved to find he was, indeed, dead. I think they would close his wounds, and wash his bruises, and wrap his corpse in spices and linen: for such was the way in which the Jews buried their dead. Then next day, or perhaps that evening, there was a gathering of devout men--some Jews, perhaps, among them who had not yet received Jesus, but knew and esteemed the wise, holy and good follower of Christ--to carry his dust to the grave. There was a great sorrow among his brethren: so excellent a man, so enlightened a teacher, so brave and powerful a preacher of the faith of Jesus, had fallen so cruelly. It is not surprising that they

were very sad, and lamented over him so sorely. Yet they did not sorrow over him as those who had no hope, either for him or themselves. How could they grieve for him, after his words about seeing Jesus? and though they must have felt that the loss to them was great, yet surely their trust in Jesus, and their love to him, must have been helped by seeing how he could make his own children brave to die. Jesus still lived, and would watch over his own, strengthening them alike for doing and suffering.

Jesus was watching over his own; he was preparing to make the very persecution that was now to rage turn to the advancing of his cause. There was one especially, who had been present at Stephen's death, and had taken a chief part in the scene, who was soon to change his course. How that came about I must tell in another story. But this other thing happened: the persecution grew so hot in Jerusalem, that many believers in Christ fled from it; but then, wherever they preached the gospel, and those very cruelties that were intended to crush the faith of Christ only served to spread it.

-----

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.



1. Can you name two others who were accused of speaking against Moses and the temple?
2. Do you remember where we are told that the enemies of Jesus, angry at his words, sought to stone him?
3. Whose face do we read about in the Old Testament as shining with a heavenly light?
4. What prophet of the Old Testament did Stephen quote, when he was speaking about God's not dwelling in temples made with hands?
5. Who are mentioned by name as standing by the cross of Jesus when he died?
6. Which of the apostles was it that saw a door opened in heaven?
7. Over whose head were the skies opened, when one was seen to descend?
8. Is Christ always said to *stand* at the right hand of God?
9. Can you find the law which says, that in cases of persons condemned to die by stoning, the witnesses were to be the first to cast stones?
10. What good man was it that died by stoning, whose last words were a prayer for justice, not for mercy?
11. Give another instance in which the death of believers is called by the name of sleep?

12. Whose funeral was it that attracted the attention of strangers, by the great mourning made by those who attended it?

13. Who was it that was buried without human hands?

ANSWERS to the foregoing questions will be found by consulting the chapters subjoined: -- Matt. xxvi. and Acts xxi.; John x.; Exod. xxxiv.; Isa. lxvi.; John xix. and Mark xv.; Rev. iv.; Matt. iii., Ps. cx., and Heb. i.; Deut. xvii; 2 Chron. xxiv.; 1 Thess. iv.; Gen. 1.; Deut. xxxiv.

-----

*Prayer.*

O GOD, we praise thee for the grace which made men brave in former times to die for Jesus. We thank Thee for the blessings which we inherit in this our own country in consequence of the sufferings of our fathers, who loved not their lives so well as they loved their Lord and His truth. We pray that Thou wouldst help those that at this time are sufferers for righteousness' sake; and plead that Thou wouldst soon put an end to all oppression and all persecution in the world. We pray for this, Lord, both for

the sake of those who are wronged, and for the good of those who do the wrong. Lord, when we come to die, may our death be indeed a falling on sleep. And when Jesus comes to call men from their graves, may we be among those who shall wake to glory, and go to be with Christ for ever. All this we ask in His blessed name.-- Amen.

-----

## EVENING WORSHIP.

GOD our Creator, Redeemer, and Judge of all men, we humbly confess our sins and acknowledge our guilt before Thee, beseeching of Thee to grant us true repentance for the same, so that we, turning away from all our iniquities, may return to Thyself; having faith in Thy mercy vouchsafed to us through Jesus Christ who died for us, and desiring evermore to abide in Him, and to bring forth fruit through the indwelling of His Holy Spirit, to whom, with Thee and Thine eternal Son, be glory for ever. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* civ. 31-34.

HOLY and rev'rend is the name  
Of our eternal King;  
Thrice holy, Lord, the angels cry,  
Thrice holy let us sing!

Holy is he, in all his works,  
And truth is his delight;  
But sinners and their wicked ways  
Shall perish from his sight.

The deepest rev'rence of the mind,  
Pay, O my soul, to God!  
Lift with thy hands a holy heart  
To his sublime abode!

With sacred awe pronounce his name,  
Whom words nor thoughts can reach;  
A broken heart shall please him more  
Than the best forms of speech.

Thou holy God! preserve my soul  
From all pollution free;  
The pure in heart are thy delight,  
And they thy face shall see!

## MATTHEW V. 1-16.

AND seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain; and when he was set, his disciples came unto him. 2. And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, 3. Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. 5. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. 6. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. 7. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. 8. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. 9. Blessed are the peace-makers: for they shall be called the children of God. 10. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. 12. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you. 13. Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted?

it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. 14. Ye are the light of the world, A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15.

Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

#### MATTHEW V. 43-48.

YE have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. 44. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you; 45. That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. 46. For if you love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? 47. And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? 48. Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

-----

*Prayer.*

O GOD, another day draws to its close, and it our privilege, through Thy great mercy in Christ, to wait upon Thee. We have good cause and much need so to do. We give Thee thanks that we are spared. Amidst dangers, seen and unseen, Thou hast preserved us. Our lives are lengthened out, and Thou hast given us all things richly to enjoy. Thou hast fed and clothed and protected us. Thou hast given us opportunities of doing and receiving good. “Thy word has been a light to our feet and a lamp to our path.” “What shall we render unto Thee for all Thy benefits!” We accept them all as the gift of thy love in Jesus Christ. But, alas! how unworthy we are of them. The more we think of them, the more we are ashamed of ourselves--our ingratitude, our unworthiness, our unfaithfulness, and sinfulness. Lord, forgive us for Christ’s sake. Wash us afresh in His blood, for it alone cleanseth from all sin. Daily and constantly we need to enter into this fountain for the removal of sin and uncleanness. Yet, sprinkled with this incense, we venture to offer to Thee the services and labours of the day. May

they and we be accepted in the Beloved. We know that in themselves and in us they must be worthless and vile in Thy sight; but Thou hast said, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise." May our lives ever serve this blessed end. May our daily walk adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. In our personal deportment, in our family relations, in our intercourse with others, may we be holy and consistent, "shining as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life." Wherein we have been honoured to have any part in Thy service and cause on the earth, may our sayings, or doing, or givings be accepted for Christ's sake. And now, O Lord, bestow Thy blessing upon us in the closing of the day. Say Thou to us, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you." Give us those blessings and a sweet assurance of them. May we each be enabled truly to say -- "O, to grace how great a debtor! daily I'm constrained to be." May we be sensible that the love of God has been shed abroad in our hearts. May we have a sweet consciousness that we enjoy the communion of the Holy Ghost. May we have His life and light and liberty. So may we be constrained to say, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord, Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." And in this spirit may we retire to the rest of the night, each saying, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit;



Thou has redeemed me:” “I will lay me down in peace and take quiet sleep, for Thou only makest me to dwell in safety.” All we ask is for Christ’s sake. *Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

*Morning.*

**And the power of the Lord was present to heal them.**

And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease.

These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:

But go rather to the lost sheep of Israel.

And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.

Luke v. 17. Matt. x. 1, 5, 6, 7, 8.

*Evening.*

**Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.**

But beware of men for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues:

And ye shall be bought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.

But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.

Matt. x. 16, 17, 18, 19.

## **TUESDAY.**

*Morning.*

**If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.**

If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

Remember the word that I said unto you. The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

But all these things they will do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin.

He that hateth me, hateth my Father also.

John xv. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23.

*Evening.*

**For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.**

Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.

If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it.

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you.

Matt. xviii. 20. Matt. xxviii. 20. John xiv. 14, 16, 17, 18.

**WEDNESDAY.**

*Morning.*

**For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee.**

At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.

Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

Acts xviii. 10.      2 Tim. iv. 16.      1 John i. 3.      Rev. iii. 20, 21.

*Evening.*

**I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.**

My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them.

And I will set up one Shepherd over them, and he shall feed them.

For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.

John x. 11.    Ezek. xxxiv. 6, 23.    1 Pet. ii. 25.    Matt. xviii. 13.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.**

For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,

Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Zech. xiii. 1.    Acts ii. 39.    Heb. xiii. 20, 21.

*Evening.*

**Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.**

Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion.

Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem.

The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

Isa. xxv. 9.      Isa. lii. 8, 9, 10.

## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**He shall save his people from their sins.**

Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.

For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel: for he hath visited and redeemed his people,

And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us.

Matt. i. 21.      Isa. lxiii. 1.      Matt. xviii. 11.      Luke i. 68, 69.

*Evening.*

**For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.**

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace,  
according to thy word:

For mine eyes have seen thy salvation.

Of this man's seed hath God, according to his promise,  
raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus.

Being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved  
from wrath through him.

Luke ii. 11, 29, 30.    Acts xiii. 23.    Rom. v. 9.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.**

Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him  
from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom.

Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the  
flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you

overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

1 Cor. vi. 20. Job. xxxiii. 24. Acts xx. 28. Matt. xx. 28. Isa. xxxv. 10.

*Evening.*

**The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted.**

There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.

Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father.

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.



For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath  
made me free from the law of sin and death.

Luke iv. 18.    Rom. xi. 26.    Gal. i. 4.    4. Gal. v. 1.    Rom. viii. 2.

# HOME PREACHER, OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

TWENTY-FOURTH WEEK.

MORNING WORSHIP.

ALMIGHTY God, who seest that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves, keep us both outwardly in our bodies and inwardly in our souls, that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul; and as we have been taught how we ought to walk and please Thee, so may we abound more and more, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* xl. 7-11.

“GOD with us!” O glorious name!  
Let it shine in endless fame!  
God and man in Christ unite;  
O mysterious depth and height!

“God with us!” eternal love  
Brought him from his courts above;  
Now ye saints, his grace admire,  
Swell the song with holy fire!

“God with us!” all pure within,  
Free from every taint of sin;  
Yet did he our guilt sustain,  
Bear the shame, the curse, the pain.

“God with us!” O wondrous grace!  
May we see him face to face:  
Then IMMANUEL shall we sing,  
As we ought, to Thee our King!

### DANIEL IX. 3-19.

AND I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes: 4. And I prayed unto the Lord my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments; 5. We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and

have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts, and from thy judgments: 6. Neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. 7. O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, that are near, and that are far off, through all the countries whither thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against thee. 8. O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee. 9. To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him; 10. Neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets. 11. Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against him. 12. And he hath confirmed his words, which he spake against us, and against our judges that judged us, by bringing upon us a great evil: for under the whole heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem. 13. As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us: yet made we not our prayer before

the Lord our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand thy truth. 14. Therefore hath the Lord watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us: for the Lord our God is righteous in all his works which he doeth: for we obeyed not his voice. 15. And now, O Lord our God, that hast brought thy people forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and hast gotten thee renown, as at this day; we have sinned, we have done wickedly. 16. O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain; because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us. 17. Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake.

*Prayer.*

ALMIGHTY God, most merciful Father! we do not present ourselves before Thy majesty trusting in our own merits or worthiness, but in Thy manifold mercies. Thou hast promised to hear our prayers and to grant our requests, in the name of Thy beloved Son Jesus Christ our

Lord: who also hath commanded us to assemble in His name, with full assurance that He will be with us, and, as our mediator and advocate, obtain all things expedient for our good. Therefore we beseech Thee, most merciful Father, turn Thy loving countenance toward us; impute not unto us our manifold offences, whereby we justly deserve Thy wrath; but rather receive us to Thy mercy for Jesus Christ's sake. Accept His life and death for all our trespasses. In Him alone Thou art well pleased, and, through Him, thou canst not be offended with us. And having of Thy compassion chosen us to be heirs with Him of that immortal kingdom prepared for us before the foundation of the world, we beseech Thee to increase our faith, knowledge, and love, enlightening our hearts with Thy Holy Spirit, that we may live in godly conversation and integrity of life.

And because Thou hast bidden us to pray for one another, we make request, O Lord, not only for ourselves, and others whom Thou hast called to the apprehension of Thy will, but for all people and nations of the world. As they know by Thy wonderful works that Thou art God over all, so by Thy Holy Spirit may they learn to believe in Christ, their only Saviour and Redeemer. But since they cannot believe except they hear, nor hear but by preaching, and none can preach except they be sent, raise up, O Lord, faithful preachers of Thy gospel, who, setting aside all

worldly considerations, may both in their life and in their doctrine seek only Thy glory. Maintain Thy cause against all opposition, and strengthen all Thy servants; let not our sins and wickedness prove a hindrance to the spread of Thy truth; but speedily, O Lord, regard the afflictions of Thy church, and make haste to save us. Arise, O Lord, and let Thine enemies be ashamed; let them flee from Thy presence that hate Thy holy name; let the groans of the prisoners come up before Thee; and preserve by Thy power such as are appointed to die. May Thy faithful servants in heathen lands ever confess Thy name, and through faith enjoy Thy presence. Let not Thy foes triumph to the end, but let them understand that against Thee they fight; behold and defend the vine that Thy right hand hath planted, and let all nations see the glory of Thine Anointed. Let Thy mighty hand and outstretched arm be ever our defence; Thy mercy and loving-kindness in Christ our salvation; Thy true and holy word our instruction; Thy grace and Holy Spirit our consolation, unto the end. Grant these our requests, O Father and all other things needful for us and Thy whole church, according to Thy promise in Jesus Christ our Lord, unto whom, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O LORD, most true and holy, most merciful and just, who hast called us with a holy calling to inherit Thy kingdom and glory, we beseech of Thee so to help and strengthen us that we may give all diligence to make our calling and election sure, by our striving to enter in at the strait gate, and by working out our own salvation with fear and trembling, that in the end an entrance may be ministered unto us abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm xxxvii.* 34-39.

RISE, my soul, and stretch thy wings  
Thy better portion trace  
Rise from transitory things,  
To heaven thy native place!  
Sun, and moon, and stars decay,  
Time shall soon this earth remove;  
Rise, my souls, and haste away  
To seats prepared above!

Cease ye pilgrims, cease to mourn,



Press onward to the prize;  
Soon the Saviour will return  
Triumphant in the skies;  
Yet a season, and you know  
Happy entrance will be given;  
All our sorrows left below,  
And earth exchanged for heaven.

### LUKE XIII. 23-30.

THEN said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, 24. Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the Master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are: 26. Then shall ye begin to say, we have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. 27. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are: depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. 28. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust

out. 29. And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. 30. And behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.

## 2 PETER III. 2-11.

THAT ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour: 3. Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, 4. And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. 5. For this they were willingly ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: 6. Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: 7. But the heavens and earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. 8. But beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness;

but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. 10. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up. 11. Seeing that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness.

-----

## SERMON XXIV.

“AND HE WENT THROUGH THE CITIES AND VILLAGES,  
TEACHING, AND JOURNEYING TOWARD JERUSALEM. THEN  
SAID ONE UNTO HIM, LORD, ARE THERE FEW THAT BE SAVED?  
AND HE SAID UNTO THEM, STRIVE TO ENTER IN AT THE  
STRAIT GATE,” ETC. -- Luke xiii. 22-30.

WE are not informed who that “one” was who put this question to our Lord, nor in what spirit or for what end he put it. A Sadducee, who denied the doctrine of future rewards and punishments, and the very existence of the soul after death, may have asked it, with a desire to entangle our

Lord in debate, and to blaspheme the truth: or it may have been addressed by a proud, self-righteous Pharisee, who, sure of his own salvation, was anxious, perhaps, to expose before the people what he deemed to be the unorthodox views of Jesus, regarding the number and character of those who should be saved: or some one whose conscience had been roused by the teaching of Jesus, and who was oppressed by a sense of what appeared to him to be the almost unsurmountable difficulties of salvation, may have asked, with fear and trembling, “Lord, are the few that be saved?”: -- or lastly, the question may have been prompted by a vain and idle curiosity, which desired to be wise above what was written, and to play with truth, as with a toy, for a little amusement or excitement during the passing hour.

Now, observe the way in which Christ replied to this question: “He said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate!” He did not give the answer which either the infidel, the hypocrite, the anxious inquirer, or the curious, anticipated or desired; for He did not say how few, or how many, are saved; but He gave the answer which they all needed, and which was the most profitable for them. *They* wished to know about the salvation of others; *He* wished them to attend to their own. *They* would look into the book of God’s counsels; *He* would have them look into their own hearts. As if He had said: “With the number of the saved you have nothing to do; but with your own salvation you

have everything to do. Instead of spending your precious time in asking, ‘Are there few who shall be saved?’ rather spend it in ‘striving’ to be saved yourselves.” We are thus taught, not only the folly of seeking to be wise above what is written, and of asking questions which God has not been pleased to answer; but more especially are we taught the necessity of settling this first and greatest of all questions. “What shall *we* do to be saved?” before occupying our time and attention with other questions which may pertain to salvation. There are very many questions deeply interesting *to a believer*, which are profitless to an unbeliever, nay, worse than profitless, because they may occupy his mind to the exclusion of the one thing needful; and just because those questions are *about* religion, and form the subject of much earnest thought to serious Christians, the very fact of his thinking and speaking and inquiring about them may deepen in him the delusion that he is himself religious--that they concern *him*, because they concern the people of God. But what is the settling of all other questions to us, however important they may be to others, as long as *this* question remains unsettled--our own personal interest in Jesus Christ? O! it is sad to hear men arguing about doctrines, and diving deep into the mysteries of theology; right it may be, in all their “opinions” and “views,” but *wrong* certainly, all the while, in their spirits towards God. “They have *well said* all that they have

spoken,” but O! That they had *such an heart* in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always!”

But let us consider the meaning of these words, “Strive to enter in at the strait (or narrow) gate, for many will seek to enter in, but shall not be able.” If we turn to the Gospel of St. Matthew (vii. 13, 14), we will see that Christ speaks of two roads and two gates: --Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.” These are pictures of the two states of mind, in either of which we *must* be. There are not *three* roads; because it is impossible for us to be else than either good or bad -- spiritually alive or dead -- “in the flesh” or “in the spirit” -- in “friendship” and “peace” with God, or at “enmity” to Him, and in fear for Him -- “in the kingdom of Satan” or ‘darkness,’ or “in the kingdom of God’s dear Son” and of “light.” Therefore Christ speaks of two roads only. The one is broad; that is to say, it is easy for the wicked to walk along it; all *they* have to do is to follow their own sinful wills in everything. The entrance to this broad road is wide, admitting every traveller while carrying the burden of the world and of his lusts with him; and “many,” accordingly, “go in thereat!”

“*Strive*,” says our Lord, “to enter in at the strait gate; for many shall *seek* to go in thereat, but shall not be able.” Now, you will observe, Jesus does not say, “Many shall *strive* to enter in but shall not be able:” He says, “many shall *seek*,” teaching us that the chief reason why men do not enter the narrow gate of salvation, and obtain rest, even while they walk in the way of God’s commandments, is that they seek, but do not strive, to enter in. It is not difficult to understand what is meant by striving, and how different a thing it is from mere seeking. Only notice the conduct of any one who, in *real earnestness* of soul, desires to obtain any good; you will perceive in his conduct this striving, and not mere seeking. Look at the student, plodding over his books late and early, reading, examining, thinking, writing; he is *striving* to obtain learning. Look at the man of business, buying, selling calculating, counting his profit and loss, speculating about markets and investments, poring over his ledgers and accounts, giving his whole heart to business; that man is *striving* to get rich. Look at the sick man, consulting doctors, trying cures, swallowing the most nauseous medicines, submitting to sore operations; that man is *striving* to get health. Watch the sailor, whose ship has foundered in the great deep; look at him and his weary companions toiling at the oar in their small boat, hungry, thirsty, faint, labouring for days and nights amidst stormy winds and angry seas, to reach, if possible, the nearest

shore; those men are *striving* to save their lives. In all those cases, we recognize men who are *in earnest*! Now, be assured, that if any of us, with the same sincerity, wished to possess a saving knowledge of God's truth--to obtain the riches of Christ--to enjoy the health of the soul--and to lay hold of eternal life--we would have the same *earnest striving*. We can see quite well that mere *seeking* would not give the student knowledge, the merchant riches, the sick man health, or the sailor life; and how, then, will mere seeking, without striving, save our souls?

“Many shall seek!” Yes, who among us is so dead, so indifferent to the future well-being of their immortal souls, as not to “*seek*”--not to do *something* to obtain salvation? Some will talk about religion, or read the Bible occasionally, or repeat a meaningless prayer, or go to church; and others will trust to their morality, their high profession, their orthodoxy, and the like; all will do something in order that they may be, at least, *safe*. “Many will seek!” It may be when sudden death strikes down an acquaintance; or when a mysterious pestilence sweeps away its victims; or when sickness enters the family, and some beloved one is laid on his dying-bed, or in his lonely grave; or, it may be, when the sinner himself is arrested by a dangerous illness, and realizes the nearness of God and the certainty of judgment, and in the silence of night recalls his past life, and all God's dealings towards him, and all his dealings towards God--it



may be, in such seasons as these, that the careless sinner will look with interest and concern for that narrow gate which he more than suspects is, after all, the only entrance to a path of pleasantness and peace, and may express a wish to enter in, nay, resolve to do so, and blame himself for his off-putting and folly in not having done so long before. He “seeks to enter in!” But when he finds that entering in at the gate implies the entering into himself of a new mind and spirit, a “putting off the old man with his affections and lusts,” a putting out of iniquity, and a putting on of “the new man, created after Christ Jesus to good works;” that, in short, as a sin-loving and sin-keeping soul, the gate cannot admit him and all his burdens--then does he refuse the Cross. To “give *all diligence* to make his calling and election sure,” to “*labour* to enter into rest,” to “work out salvation with fear and trembling:” in one word, to sacrifice *self*, by accepting of Christ with his free pardon and new life--all this requires not seeking only, but striving, whereas the slothful wish to get all by seeking only. How necessary is our Lord’s solemn command and warning, “*Strive* to enter in, for many shall *seek* to enter in, but shall not be able!”

“When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door.” What means this! Christ is the Master of the house, “whose house are we, if we hold fast our confidence.” *Now* He invites and commands men to

enter into his house by the strait gate and narrow way and to sit down with himself and his many guests, to enjoy holy communion, refreshment, and repose. But the time at last arrives when the door of the house is shut, and shut for ever. This is the period of judgment--a period of solemn trial--when the righteousness of Christ's dealings towards every man will be made manifest upon evidence, before the assembled universe. Then will those who refused, during the day of peace, to enter in by the narrow door, "begin to stand without, and to say, Lord, Lord, open unto us!" The scene is now changed. Formerly Christ had been seeking entrance into their home--even the home of the hearts, saying: "Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man open unto me, I will come in and sup with him, and he with me." But they were too slothful and wicked to open the door to Him. *Now* they seek admittance into his "Father's house," and to the marriage supper, as they stand without knocking, crying, "Open to us!" But Christ's door is for ever closed against them! And why? Because, unless Christ enters, and dwells in our hearts by faith now, we cannot enter heaven and dwell with Christ hereafter: for there can be no fellowship with Christ, no union or communion with Him and with his people, except the fellowship of spirit, affection, character, oneness of heart and will. To "open the door" to us without this in us is impossible; and this *character* mere seekers have not, and

the time for obtaining it has passed away. "I know you not," is his reply. "We are not friends--we are not one. I am holy; ye are workers of iniquity." In the first chapter of Proverbs, verse 28, we have the same solemn picture presented to us, of the sinner's calling on God" when too late, but getting "no answer" -- "seeking Him, but not finding him;" and being permitted to "to eat the fruit of his own ways, and to be filled with his own devices," *because* "he hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord." God saves us from hell, by saving us from sin; He gives us heaven, only by giving us the knowledge and the love of Himself. And when men at the last day cry to God, it is not the cry of children seeking a parent, but the cry only from those who have "a fearful looking for of judgment" -from those who seek deliverance from the terrible *consequences* only of their walking in the broad way of sin; but who, nevertheless, hate the holiness and self-denial of the narrow way as much as ever. They are not "born again;" they want the right mind and heart; and so "they cannot enter the kingdom of God."

"Then ye shall begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets." Such is the pleading of those lost sinners -- such their reasons why the sentence of condemnation should not be pronounced against them. As if they had said, "We are not astonished that thou shouldest shut out those infidels who never

acknowledged Thee; but we ever called Thee what we call Thee now -- ‘Lord.’ We wonder not that those who never heard or never would listen to thy word, should be rejected by Thee; but ‘we have heard Thee teach,’ and have regularly attended to a preached gospel. They who would not remember Thee at thy sacramental feast on earth, may well be refused admittance to thy marriage feast in heaven; but we have eaten and drunk in thy presence-- “Lord, Lord, open to us!” Does the Lord deny all this? Does He say that they spoke untruth? By no means. All this they could truly say, and even more than this; for, as we read in another Gospel, many, like Judas, will come at that day, and say, Have we not cast out devils in thy name, and in thy name done many wonderful works.” But what will all this prove? It will prove that they had gifts but not that they had grace; it will prove that they were *seeking*, but not that they were *striving*, to enter in at the strait gate. O, what a solemn warning is here given to the ministers and professing members of the church of Christ! What profession may exist without principle! How much we may *do*, and yet never *be* right with God! What good may be done *by* us, and yet no real good be *in* us! How much *seeking* may there be without any earnest *striving*! For observe, those who could say, and, for aught that appears, say with truth, that they possessed such privileges, made such a profession, and performed such works, were,

nevertheless, known to Christ *as workers of iniquity* only. “I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.”

“There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” The broad way which began with “eating and drinking, and making merry,” thus ends with “weeping and gnashing of teeth;” for “there is a way that seemeth good to a man, but the end thereof is as the ways of death.” What is the immediate cause of this sore agony? It is “seeing Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and themselves thrust out.” But why should such a sight like this produce such overwhelming and bitter sorrow? Because every patriarch and prophet there will be a witness against the sloth, self-indulgence, and indifference of the mere *seekers* after salvation. All those had entered in through the narrow gate--all had obtained the promises “through faith and patience” --all had “come out of much tribulation,” and “endured a great fight of afflictions,” and had carried their cross and despised the shame. In one word, they had been *striving*, and not *seeking* merely: and the very sight of those men of God, and the remembrance of all they had been and had done while on earth, carries home to the hearts of the vain and wicked “seekers” the stern conviction that their condemnation is just; that those holy men had resisted temptations to which mere seekers yielded; and had overcome difficulties by which they were

repelled; and had pushed on in spite of those obstacles from which they had shrunk; and with fewer means and opportunities, and, it may be, with greater temptations and difficulties, had entered that gate of self-denial which they, in their miserable sloth and wickedness, thought so narrow, that they turned aside from it for the broad and easy way of fleshly self-indulgence.

What worker of iniquity, what slothful and unprofitable servant, in these days of gospel light and privileges in which we live, dare attempt to excuse himself for his impenitence, when he beholds those servants of the Most High God in his kingdom? Had those patriarchs more light than we now possess? They lived during the dawn, we beneath the meridian splendour, of Revelation! Were they called to an easier life than ours? Or to the performance of labour which required less faith, less self-sacrifice, less crucifying of the flesh, than those which God has assigned to us now? Was it thus with Abraham, who left his country, and lived a stranger in the land amidst idolaters, and at God's simple command offered up his only son, whom he loved? Was it thus with Moses, who preferred to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season? Was it thus with Daniel, who accepted the lions' den with God rather than the palace without him? Was it thus with that cloud of witnesses mentioned by Paul in the eleventh chapter of the Hebrews? Reading that chapter, we

must even now, if we are slothful, be silent, and find no excuse or our indifference! Even now we might weep with shame and sorrow at our want of likeness to those faithful servants, with whom we vainly hope, in our present state, to live for ever! No wonder if there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth hereafter, in seeing such men in God's kingdom, if we are thrust out; for this conviction must overwhelm our spirit--that if they found the gate in the morning twilight, we might easily have seen it and found it in the noon-day brightness; that if they carried such heavy crosses, and pursued their solitary but patient journey, for so many years along the narrow way, we might have carried our lighter cross, and pursued our easier and shorter journey, amidst the companionships of the Christian church and the manifold blessings of the latter day, if only, like those men, we had loved God, and had been in earnest! But we were slothful, and "workers of iniquity;" so we must feel that we deserve to perish!

They shall come from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God." Not in vain has the gospel been preached by faithful missionaries! In spite of the slothful, who would not enter the gate themselves, and who, consequently, cared not though the whole world should follow their example; in spite of all the arguments and opposition of the enemy, "a multitude greater than any man can number, of all nations,

and kindred, and people,” shall sit down at the marriage supper of the Lamb. The redeemed “from the east” --that mighty host which will have been gathered to Christ, from the days of “righteous Abel” down to the last convert in Hindostan or China--will all mingle with the multitude who will pass to glory, from the west,” throughout succeeding ages -- the increasing millions of the vast American continent. “They shall come from the south!” The South Seas have already furnished many guests; and many more from those clustered and far-spread islets and island-continent will mingle with the African negro, and with the cultivated European, and with the lonely Esquimaux and Greenlander, who will “come from the north:” and the “one family” will sing with one heart the new song of praise to the Redeemer-- “Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests.” Let the redeemed of the Lord say so whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy, and gathered them out of the lands from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.” And when we read, even now, the history of God’s work among the heathen, and “see what He hath wrought,” and what has been accomplished in them and by them--what battles have been fought, and victories won, over long accumulating ignorance and superstition--what agonizing



partings with kindred have been endured --what sacrifices of body and soul have been made in holding fast to duty--what steadfastness amidst opposition has been manifested by them; and when we contrast this earnest and laborious striving, among those who have been “last” called to the knowledge of Christ, with the sloth and indifference, the carnality, covetousness, prayerlessness, and hardness of heart, among those who have been “first” called; who cry, “Lord, Lord,” and “hear Christ teach,” and “eat and drink in his presence,” yet are, after all, mere seekers, and, in God’s sight, “workers of iniquity:” then do we already understand how those who are accounted last *now*, will be first then; and how those who vainly think themselves first now, will be *last* then; and how our Capernaums, where Christ teaches daily, may, because of their unbelief in the midst of their boasted privileges, receive at last a more dreadful condemnation, and though now “exalted to heaven, be then thrust down to hell!”

Let us learn, then, from this passage, to be *in earnest*, if we would possess true religion or any good! Let all mere formality, empty talk, outside profession, and pretence, be banished from us, as a lie; for whatever else shall stand at judgment, all that is false must surely perish; and whatever else commands a blessing, certain it is that no blessing can possibly rest upon insincerity and want of earnestness. Let us never forget that we are, truly, just what God knows us

to be; and that having a name to live will not save us (though it may deceive us), if the heart-searching God, who cannot be mocked, sees that we are cold formalists, empty pretenders, slothful hypocrites, dead! May God quicken us more and more through the Spirit of life which was in his Son! May He breathe on those dry bones that they may live! May He deepen on our souls a sense of our responsibility, increase our faith in the reality of things unseen, awaken in us a more abiding conviction of the necessity of solemn earnestness in making our calling and election sure; that in *his* sight we may all, not only seek, but “strive” to enter in at the strait gate, and to walk along the narrow path that leadeth unto life! -- EDITOR.

-----

## THE CHILDREN’S SERVICE.

HOW A GREAT PERSECUTOR BECAME A GREAT PREACHER.

AMONG those who were standing by when the good Stephen was stoned to death, there was a young man who was in after years to do a great work in the world. He was one of the Jews of that time who had not been born in their

own land. There were a great many of these: for owing to various causes, a vast number of families who belonged to the stock of Abraham, had come to live in Gentile countries. When God chose his own people and made them dwell in Canaan, he meant that they should be like a great lamp in the midst of the earth, drawing nations to its light. But when the Jews allowed the light to burn dim, he scourged them for their sin, by letting them be taken captive into a foreign land, and at the same time prepared for a time when those who have the light are not merely to keep it burning, but to carry it out into the darkness. After the Jews were brought back from Babylon--though a great many of them did not return--other things happened which led or drove numbers of them away into western cities, taking their Scriptures and their manners with them, and coming to be small lamps of truth, shining more or less clearly in heathen places. When the great Roman empire spread, the Jewish emigrants spread also, and were found in almost every town of note. Among these towns, one well known was Tarsus in Cilicia. The young man who was present at Stephen's martyrdom was born there. His father held a good position, and was a citizen of Rome--one of those who for some good service (some had it for a good price) had been made a Roman, so as to have the same advantages and protection as were enjoyed by those who had been born in Italy, or the great city itself. The youth, accordingly, was a free-born

Roman citizen. In his boyhood he had got a good education, and had been sent afterwards to Jerusalem to be in the school of a great doctor there, whose name was Gamaliel. He proved a very clever scholar; and when after going home, he came back a young man full of learning and zeal, all the older rabbis said he would be a great man, and would defend the views of the strict sect of the Pharisees nobly: so they made him a member of their great council, and perhaps he was one of the very court that saw Stephen's face shine like an angel. He certainly was present, whether he was one of the judges or no, and he made himself forward to take the saint's life: for next to the witnesses that were to be the first to stone a person condemned to die, there ranked the person that watched over the clothes they threw off when they prepared themselves to cast the stones. Now when Stephen was killed, the young man I speak of, and whose name was Saul, kept the clothes of his murderers, who had laid them down at his feet. So he must have heard and seen all that happened that day when the first Christian martyr died. Perhaps he heard his prayer to Jesus to forgive those who slew him. He was to be a great part of God's answer to this prayer. An old writer says something like this:--

If Stephen had not prayed  
Paul had never preached.

Prayers are often like seeds cast into the ground. They seem to go out of sight, and to be lost for a time; but they are not lost. They are where they must be, in order to their springing up and bearing a rich harvest of answer. They are with God; and he is making them grow, to be seen in due time. Thus, after Stephen's death the young man Saul seemed more mad against the Christians than ever. But the prayer of the dying martyr was not forgotten, as we shall see. The Lord whom Stephen saw before he died is going to show himself again to the eyes of a man, and to bring about a change for which a world shall be glad. Saul, as well as Stephen, is to see Jesus; and to go forth into many lands, with a double portion of the departed saint's spirit on him.

The change came to pass in this way. Saul, being very full of zeal against Christ's disciples and wishing to rid the whole earth of them, asked the high priest to give him letters of introduction to the Jews that were in Damascus, that with their help he might find out the Christians there, and bring them back to Jerusalem, bound like prisoners. He had done this already in some other towns, being, as he said himself, "exceedingly mad" against all who loved Jesus. So the high priest gave him the letters he wanted, and with a company of attendants, he set on his journey to Damascus. How long he took on the way, we do not know, but at length at mid-day he came in sight of the famous city, which

was the capital of Syria. It is said that the view which he must have had of it is a very lovely one. But as he looked on it, I suppose he was more taken up with the thought that he would soon be there, searching out the people who had been so bad as to believe in Jesus. Perhaps, though, he could not at times help thinking if they are all like Stephen, who prayed the other day for those who were stoning him to death, they cannot be so very bad after all. If such a thought, however, did at times come into his mind, he did not allow it to stay there, but was eager to go on and be at his persecuting work. But in a moment all is changed. A light so wonderfully bright that it put the sun out of sight, more than you have seen the sunshine make a lamp burn dim, shone suddenly round about him, and he and all his company fell to the ground. As Saul lay there, a voice which the rest heard like a sound, without catching the words, named him twice and said, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? He was able to answer, but he felt at once that he was before One far greater than himself, and he said, Lord, who art thou? The voice said again, I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. These words Saul never forgot. They came from one whom he saw quite plainly, though the sight struck him blind. He found out, in that awful but blessed moment, what a glorious person he had been fighting against, and he gave up fighting at once. He could only say, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? His heart

was changed--what he had hated he now loved, as he never loved anything before. If he live now, he can only live for Christ Jesus. So, when the Lord who had appeared to him in the way told him to rise and go into the city, and wait till it should be told him what he was to do; he obeyed at once. But poor man, or rather happy man, he was blind--blind to the sun's light, because he had seen Christ's face. The people that were with him had to lead him by the hand, and bring him into the city. There he lodged three days and nights, seeing nothing, eating nothing, drinking nothing. But he was with Christ, learning what only Christ can teach. After that the Lord bade a disciple go to him, and restore his eye-sight, and tell him that God had chosen him to go and preach the gospel to all nations of the earth. At first this disciple, whose name was Ananias, was afraid to go, he had heard so much of Saul's fierceness and hatred of Christ's people; but Jesus told him what a great servant of his Saul was yet to be, and the good man went and put his hand on Saul's head, and called him, Brother, and said, Receive thy sight. Then there fell from Saul's eyes what looked like scales, and he looked up, and could see quite plain. Then he was baptized, as a disciple of Jesus, and began at once to preach salvation by the very name he had wished to make all men forget or curse. How he preached, and what happened to him as he preached Jesus in a great many places, I shall in part relate hereafter.

In the meantime, let me ask you, have you seen the Lord in the way? Christ does not now show himself to the eyes of your body, as he showed his face to Saul. But he makes souls to see him, shows his glory to their thoughts and their love. Sometimes he does this very suddenly, as if a flash of lightning came. Sometimes the light grows slowly, like the dawn of morn brightening into day. I do not ask how you have come to see Christ, but have you seen him? Do you love that name more than any other, more than all names besides? If so, Jesus has work for you also to do; ask him, as Saul did, to tell you what it is.

-----

### QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. What text in the Gospels refers to the scattering of a number of the Jews among heathen nations?
2. Can you name a young man who was chosen of God to do a great exploit, which all older people were afraid to attempt?
3. What great prophet was it that was granted to a weeping woman's prayer?
4. Can you find me a seed-prayer in the Psalms which has sprung up, but has not yet come to bear full fruit?



5. Where do we find the proof from Paul's own words that Jesus really was seen by him?

6. Who was it that in one hour changed from a trembling heathen to a happy Christian?

7. Can you name a man who was surprised to learn that God was going to answer his prayer, after he thought that it had been refused?

8. Who saw Christ's face shine like the sun, while he was yet a poor man on the earth?

9. Who tells of his seeing Christ's face as bright as the brightest sunshine, after he had risen from the dead?

10. Where does Paul speak of himself as not a whit behind the chief of the apostles?

11. Where does he speak of himself as less than all the others?

ANSWERS to the foregoing questions will be found by consulting the following chapters.--John vii; 1 Sam. xvii.; 1 Sam. i.; Ps. lxxvii. and lxxviii.; 1 Cor. ix and xv.; Acts xvi.; Luke i.; Matt. xvii.; Rev. i.; 1 Cor. xi. and xii.; 1 Cor. xv.

---

*Prayer.*

O Lord, we thank Thee for changing the heart of Saul of Tarsus, and making him an apostle. We thank Thee for what we know of his life, and what Thou hast written to us by his pen. We praise thee that Thou didst send him to the

Gentiles, and that the Lord Jesus, whom he saw, and loved, and preached, is a Saviour for the world. We pray Him to call us to the work He would have us to do, and to give us hearts to love it, and to urge us to do it, whatever it may be. And, O, at last may we see Jesus as he is, and be like him. *Amen.*

-----

### EVENING WORSHIP.

WE beseech thee, Almighty God, look down upon the hearty desires of Thy humble servants, and as Thou hast enlightened us with the knowledge of Thy truth, so enable us to walk as children of the light, and to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, that bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit, in all goodness, righteousness, and truth, we may be ever under Thy divine protection, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or PSALM* xci. 1-6.

ABIDE with me, fast falls the eventide:  
The darkness thickens: Lord, with me abide.  
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,  
Help of the helpers, O abide with me.

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day:  
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;  
Change and decay in all around I see:  
O thou who changest not, abide with me.

Not a brief glance I beg, a passing word,  
But as thou dwell'st with thy disciples, Lord:  
Familiar, condescending, patient, free,  
Come not to sojourn, but abide with me.

Come not in terrors, as the King of kings,  
But kind and good, with healing in thy wings;  
Tears for all woes, a heart for every plea;  
Come, Friend of sinners, thus abide with me.

I need thy presence every passing hour:  
What but thy grace can foil the tempter's power?  
Who like Thyself my Guide and stay can be?  
Through cloud and sunshine, O abide with me.

I fear no foe, with Thee at hand to bless;  
Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.  
Where is Death's sting? Where, Grave, thy victory?  
I triumph still, if Thou abide with me.

Hold Thou thy cross before my closing eyes,  
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies:  
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;  
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.

## HEBREWS X. 16-31, 35-39.

THIS is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; 17. And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. 18. Now, where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. 19. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20. By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the vail, that is to say, his flesh; 21. And having an high priest over the house of God; 22. Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. 23. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) 24. And let us consider one another, to provoke unto love, and to good works: 25. Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. 26. For if we sin wilfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, 27. But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. 28. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three

witnesses: 29. Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace? 30. For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth to me, I will recompense saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. 31. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. 35 Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. 36. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. 37. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. 38. Now, the just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. 39. But we are not of them that draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

#### JEREMIAH XVII. 5-8.

THUS saith the Lord; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord: 6. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh, but shall

inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited. 7. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is: 8. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of draught, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

-----

*Prayer.*

OUR Father which art in heaven! We draw near to Thee with assured confidence through Thy beloved Son, earnestly beseeching that Thy great and holy name may be glorified in every place. Extend Thy dominion over all the earth, leading Thy people by the sceptre of Thy word and the power of Thy Spirit, and confounding all Thine enemies by the might of thy righteousness and truth. Be pleased to rule over and guide us, that we may daily learn more and more to submit ourselves to Thy Majesty, as our governor and king. Destroy every power and principality opposed to Thy glory, until Thy kingdom be perfectly established, and Thou appear for judgment in the person of Thy Son. Great

God! make us able and willing to render Thee true and perfect obedience on earth, as do thy heavenly angels, that seek only to execute Thy commands. Thus may Thy will without contradiction be fulfilled and all men submit to Thee, renouncing their own purposes, and all the affections of the flesh.

Grant also, good Lord, that we, walking in the fear and love of Thy holy name, may through Thy goodness be nourished day by day; and receive at Thy hands all things expedient and necessary for us, that we may use Thy gifts in quietness and peace. And observing Thy care of us, may we better acknowledge Thee to be our Father, expect all benefits at Thy hands only, and withdrawing our confidence from creatures, place it wholly in Thy favour and Thy love.

And because in this mortal life we are prone to wander from the right way, and do continually come short of our duty, we beseech Thee, Lord, forgive our faults, by which we have deserved Thy chastisement; deliver us from that everlasting death unto which we are justly exposed; impute not unto us the evil that dwells within us; and even so may we, according to Thy command, forgive the trespasses of others, and do good unto our enemies, rather than seek their hurt.

Finally, O Lord, vouchsafe to uphold us henceforth by thy power, lest we fall through the weakness of the flesh. And since of ourselves we are frail, and beset with foes, the

world, the flesh, and the devil, that cease not to war against us, be pleased to fortify us with Thy Spirit, and arm us with Thy grace; may we withstand all manner of temptation, and gain full victory in our spiritual warfare, so that at last we may triumph eternally in Thy kingdom, with our sovereign Head and Captain, Jesus Christ Thy Son. *Amen.*

-----



## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

#### *Morning.*

**For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.**

I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things.

Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness; let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together: I the Lord have created it.

Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioned it, What makest thou? Or thy work, he hath no hands?

Isa. xiv. 4, 7, 8, 9.

#### *Evening.*

**And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor, of my mountains: and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there.**

And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and the valley of Achor a place for the herds to lie down in, for my people that have sought me.

They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble: for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them.

And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

Isa. lxxv. 9, 10, 23, 24.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**In those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be.**

And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved; but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days.

And then, if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ; or, Lo, he is there; believe him not:

For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect.

Mark xiii. 19, 20, 21, 22.

*Evening.*

**For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.**

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren.

Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.

Rom. viii. 14, 29, 30, 31, 33.

## WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**When Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac:**

(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand,

It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger.

As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.

For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

Rom. ix. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.

*Evening.*

**So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.**

Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.

Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?

What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?

And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory.

Rom. ix. 16, 18, 20, 22, 23.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.**

God hath not cast away his people which foreknew.  
Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying,

Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.

But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal.

Rom. xi. 1, 2, 3, 4.

*Evening.*

**What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for: but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded**

(According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear) unto this day.

I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.

Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?

Rom. xi. 7, 8, 11, 12.

## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:**

According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

Having predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.

Eph. i. 1, 4, 5.

*Evening.*

**In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace:**

Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence;

That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are in earth; even in him.

Eph. i. 7, 8, 10.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.**

The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; (for ye were the fewest of all people;)

But because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bond-men, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy.

Deut. vii. 6, 7, 8, 9.

*Evening.*

**In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion.**

Deliver me in thy righteousness, and cause me to escape: incline thine ear unto me, and save me.

Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort: thou hast given commandment to save me; for thou art my rock and my fortress.

For thou art my hope, O Lord God: thou art my trust from my youth.

By thee have I been holden up from the womb: thou art he that took me out of my mother's bowels: my praise shall be continually of thee.

I am as a wonder unto many: but thou art my strong refuge.

Ps. lxxi. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7.



HOME PREACHER,  
OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

TWENTY-FIFTH WEEK.

MORNING WORSHIP.

FATHER of Lights! who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men, grant unto us Thy people that we may love the things which Thou commandest, and desire that which Thou dost promise, that so, among the sundry and manifold changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed, where true joys are to be found, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm li. 1-7.*

WITH broken heart and contrite sigh,  
A trembling sinner, Lord, I cry;  
Thy pardoning grace is rich and free,  
O God, be merciful to me.

I smite upon my troubled breast,  
With deep and conscious guilt oppressed;  
Christ and his cross my only plea,  
O God, be merciful to me.

Far off I stand with tearful eyes,  
Nor dare uplift them to the skies;  
But Thou dost all my anguish see,  
O God, be merciful to me.

Nor alms, nor deeds that I have done,  
Can for a single sin atone;  
To Calvary alone I flee,  
O God, be merciful to me.

And when redeemed from sin and hell,  
With all the a ransomed throng I dwell,  
My raptured song shall ever be,  
God has been merciful to me.

## ISAIAH LXI. 1-3, 10-11.

THE Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; 2. To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; 3. To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called Trees of righteousness, The planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified. 10. I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels. 11. For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

## PSALM CXXXIX.

O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me. 2. Thou knowest my down sitting and mine uprising: thou understandest my thought far off. 3. Thou compassest my path, and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. 4. For there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. 5. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. 6. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. 7. Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? 8. If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there, &c.

### *Prayer.*

GREAT God, our thoughts are directed to Thy throne and to the Mediator before it; and truly this is the great joy and comfort of our hearts, that we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who at this moment stands presenting our names before thine infinite Majesty, and pleading that we may be accepted and our prayers heard through Him. O Son of God, we worship Thee this morning with hearty love, rejoicing in Thee, ascribing all

honour unto Thee; for Thou was slain and hast redeemed us unto God by Thy blood, and hast made us kings and priests unto God, and we shall reign for ever and ever. We adore the infinite Father; we adore the blessed Spirit: we equally adore the once crucified Son of God. With cherubim and seraphim, and all the hosts of ministering spirits, we bow before the throne of the one Jehovah, and ascribe honour, and glory, and dominion, and might, to Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever: and let all the redeemed say, Amen.

Lord, forgive us that we do not always thus adore Thee in our lives; forgive us that oftentimes our actions are not at all in accordance with the language we have now used. How often do we forget Thee! How often do we set up our wills in opposition to Thine! How often do we inwardly repine at Thy providence towards us, and thus make our wisdom to be greater than Thy wisdom! Lord, we are foolish, perverse, obstinate, wicked, and sinning continually but through Thy grace may we be enabled to appeal to Thee that we hate the sin, that we desire to be free from it, that we would have our minds entirely and at once moulded to Thy will, and that in no respect, either in thought, word, or deed, would we wander from Thee.

O God, forgive the offences of Thy servants through the great sacrifice of Jesus. This morning we take our stand beneath that sheltering tree where He found no

shelter. We look above to Him, whose blessed body was tortured with the pains of crucifixion, and whose holy soul was overwhelmed with unutterable grief and anguish, and see in Him, the Lamb of God slain from before the foundation of the world, our only hope. God forbid that we should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. O Lord, may thy Holy Spirit every day teach us more of Him. May He keep us to this one point of desiring to know nothing among men, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified; and lead us to count all besides, even our best righteousness, as loss and dung, that we may win Christ and be found in him. O Saviour, if we have relied on any ground of hope but Thyself, be pleased to show us our mistake, and bring us to a simple unalloyed confidence in Thy blood and righteousness.

On this the day which Thou hast made, let all Thy worshippers rejoice and be glad in it: Save now, we beseech Thee, O Lord: O Lord, we beseech Thee, send now prosperity. To all that in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both theirs and ours, may grace and peace be multiplied from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Whenever the gospel of the kingdom shall this day be proclaimed, may it be in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power, so as to teach transgressors Thy ways, and that sinners shall be converted unto Thee. Let the churches everywhere have rest and be edified, and walking

in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, be multiplied. Grant, O merciful Father, these our prayers, for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

GOD of Truth, who didst send Thy Son to reveal to us the truth, who as a king did come into the world that He might witness to the truth, and who is the faithful and true Witness, grant us the truthful heart that will hear the voice of our Lord, cherish His spirit, and follow in His steps, so that we may walk in Thy light, and rejoice in Thy truth all the day long, and finally escape the righteous condemnation of those who reject the truth or hold it in unrighteousness. *Amen.*

HYMN, or *Psalm* cxxii.

WITH love the Saviour's heart o'erflow'd,  
Love spoke in every breath;  
Supreme it reigned throughout his life,  
And triumph'd in his death.

Behold! This new command He gives  
To those who bear his name--  
That they shall one another love,  
As He hath loved them.

In ev'ry action, ev'ry thought,  
Be this great law fulfill'd;  
Forgotten be each selfish aim,  
Each angry passion still'd.

Let all who bear the name of Christ,  
While they his suff'rings view,  
Think of his words, "Each other love,  
As I have loved you."



## LEVITICUS XVI. 20-24.

AND when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat: 21. And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness. 22. And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness. 23. And Aaron shall come into the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall put off the linen garments which he put on when he went into the holy *place*, and shall leave them there: 24. And he shall wash his flesh with water in the holy place, and put on his garments, and come forth, and offer his burnt-offering, and the burnt-offering of the people, and make an atonement for himself and for the people.

-----

## SERMON XXV.

“FOR CHRIST’S SAKE.” -- Ephesians iv. 32.

THIS is the great argument of awakened sinners, when they seek mercy at God’s hands. Aforetime they could boast of their own righteousness, they could rest upon their feelings, their resolutions, their goodness of heart, or their prayers; but now that God and the Holy Spirit has shown them what they are, and revealed to them the desperate evil of their hearts, they dare not offer any other plea than this--“For Christ’s sake.” They look, and there is no man to succour; they cast their eye around, and there is no helper, and their heart knows neither peace nor hope till they behold the person and sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and then straightway their mouth is opened with arguments, and they can plead with God with prevailing reasons, saying, “For Christ’s sake, for Christ’s sake, have mercy upon me.” Indeed, beloved, this is the only argument which can prevail with God in prayer, whether the prayer cometh from saint or sinner. It is true that God did not originally love us for Christ’s sake, for his electing love was sovereign and absolute: but the Father loved us not because the Saviour died, but the Saviour died because the Father loved us from

before the foundation of the world. Nevertheless the one only channel of communication between a loving Father and his elect people is the meritorious and glorious person of Christ. The Father gives us no privilege except through His Only Begotten, nor are we looked upon as accepted or acceptable, except as we stand, in and through our Lord Jesus, accepted in the Beloved, perfect in Christ Jesus. I must use no other argument when I plead with God but the name of his dear Son, for this is the sum of all heavenly logic. Whatever covenant mercy I may wish for, this is the key which will unlock the storehouses of heaven, but none other name will prevail with God to scatter his mercies among undeserving sinners. He who knows how to plant his foot on the solid foothold of “for Christ’s sake,” needs not fear, like Jacob, to wrestle with the angel of God. But if we forget this in our prayers, we have lost the muscle and sinew from the arm of prayer; we have snapped the spinal column by which the manhood of prayer is sustained erect; we have pulled down about our own ears the whole temple of supplication, as Samson did the house of the Philistines. “For Christ’s sake,” this is the one unbuttressed pillar upon which all prayer must lean: take this away, and it comes down with a crash; let this stand, and prayer stands like a heaven-reaching minaret holding communion with the skies.

In two ways, we will read the words before us. *It is God's argument for mercy.* -- "For Christ's sake." *It is our reason for service--* "For Christ's sake."

I. *God's argument for mercy.* He forgives us "For Christ's sake."

Here let us first look at the *force of this motive*; and then, secondly, let us notice some qualifications in it, which may, through God's blessing, be the means of comforting seeking sinners who desire to find rest in and through Jesus Christ.

1. Let us consider the *force of this motive* by which God is moved to forgive sinners, "For Christ's sake." You know that if we do a thing for the sake of a person, several considerations may work together to make our motive powerful, that we may be willing, not only to do some things, but many things, nay, all things, for the sake of the individual admired or beloved.

The first thing which will move us to do anything for another's sake is his person, with its various additions of position and character. The excellence of a man's person has often moved others to high enthusiasm, to the spending of their lives; ay, to the endurance of cruel deaths for his sake. In the day of battle, if the advancing column wavered for a single moment, Napoleon's presence made every man a hero. When Alexander led the van, there was not a man in all the Macedonian ranks who would have hesitated to lose

his life in following him. For David's sake the three mighties broke through the host, at imminent peril of their lives, to bring him water from the well of Bethlehem. Some men have a charm about them which enthrals the souls of other men, who are fascinated by them and count it their highest delight to do them honour. There have been in different ages leaders, both warlike and religious, who have so entirely possessed the hearts of their followers that no sacrifice was counted too great, no labour too severe. There is much to move the heart in excellence of person. How shall I, in fitting manner, lead you to contemplate the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, seeing that his charms as far exceed all human attractions as the sun outshines the stars! Yet this much I will be bold to say, that he is so glorious that even the God of heaven may well consent to do ten thousand things for his sake. We believe our Lord Jesus Christ to be very God of very God, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father, essential Deity. Jesus is no distinct God, separate from the Father, but, in a mysterious manner, he is one with the Father, so that the old Jewish watchword still stands true, "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord," and yet Jesus is Jehovah-Tsidkenu, the Lord our Righteousness. Besides this, he, for us men and for our salvation, took upon himself the form and nature of man; became incarnate, as the virgin's son; and as such lived a life of perfection, never sinning, always full of love and holy

service, both to God and man. There he stands: by the eye of faith ye may see him, “God over all, blessed for ever;” and yet man, of the substance of his mother, he stands to plead before the eternal throne--Almighty God, all-perfect man. He wears upon his head a crown, for he is a prince of the house of David, and his dominion is an everlasting dominion. Upon his bosom glitters the bejewelled breastplate, for he is a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedek; and over his shoulders hangs the mantle of prophecy, for he is a prophet, and more than a prophet. Now, as he stands there, adored of angels worshipped by cherubim and seraphim, having the keys of heaven, and earth, and hell at his girdle, master of winds and waves, Lord of providence, the Wonderful, the Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords; I wonder not, that such a person should prevail with the Father, and that God, for his sake, should bestow innumerable blessings upon the unworthy for whom he pleads. He is the chief among ten thousand and the altogether lovely. His head is as the much fine gold; his lips like lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh; his countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars, his mouth is most sweet, yea he is altogether lovely: --

“The whole creation can afford  
But some faint shadows of my Lord;

Nature, to make his beauties known,  
Must mingle colours not her own

Nor earth, nor seas, nor sun, nor stars,  
Nor heaven, his full resemblance bears;  
His beauties we can never trace,  
Till we behold him face to face.”

In the surpassing majesty of his person lies a part of the force of the plea.

A far greater power lies in near and dear *relationship*. The mother, whose son, had been many years at sea, pined for him with all a mother’s fondness. She was a widow, and her heart had but this one object left. One day there came to the cottage door a ragged sailor. He was limping on a crutch, and seeking alms. He had been asking at several houses for a widow of such-and-such a name. He had now found her out. She was glad to see a sailor, for never since her son had gone to sea had she turned one away from her door, for her son’s sake. The present visior told her that he had served in the same ship with her beloved boy; that they had been wrecked together and cast upon a barren shore; that her son had died in his arms, and that he had charged him with his dying breath to take his Bible to his mother (she would know by that sign that it was her son), and to charge her to receive his comrade affectionately and kindly

for her son's sake. You may well conceive how the best of the house was set before the stranger. He was but a common sailor; there was nothing in him to recommend him. His weather-beaten cheeks told of service, but it was not service rendered to her: he had no claim *on her*, and yet there was bed and board, and the widow's hearth for him. Why? Because she seemed to see in his eyes the picture of her son, and that look, the sure token of good faith, opened her heart and her house to the stranger. Relationship will frequently do far more than mere excellence of the person. Bethink you, brethren, Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God. Our God had but one begotten Son, and that Son the darling of his bosom. Oh, how the Father loved him. It is not possible for us to measure divine love, for we have no measuring line. Human love at best is only finite, even when it reaches its very highest. When we plunge into the depths of human love, there is yet a bottom; but divine love has neither shore nor bound. Little can we tell of what *unity of essence* means. The divine persons are one in essence--one God. We cannot therefore conceive what affection must spring from this closest of all known unities. Oh, how Jehovah loves him! And yet that dear Son of his, for our sakes left the starry throne of heaven, became a man, suffered, bled, and died; and when we come to mercy's bar, bringing with us Christ's own promise, the eternal Father sees Jesus in our eyes, bids us welcome to mercy's



table and to mercy's house, for the sake of him who is his only begotten Son.

Still I have only advanced to the border of my subject. The force of the words, "For Christ's sake," must be found deeper still, namely in *the worthiness of the person and of his acts*. Many peerages have been created in this realm which descend from generation to generation, with large estates, the gift of a generous nation, and why? Because this nation has received some signal benefits from one man, and has been content to ennoble his heirs for ever for his sake. I do not think there was any error committed when Marlborough or Wellington were lifted to the peerage; having saved their country in war, it was right that they should be honoured in peace; and when for the sake of the parents perpetual estates were entailed upon their descendants, and honours in perpetuity conferred upon their sons, it was only acting according to the laws of gratitude. Let us bethink ourselves of what Jesus Christ has done, and let us understand how strong must be that plea-- "For Jesus' sake." The law of God was violated; Jesus Christ came into the world and kept it--kept it so that out of the whole ten commandments there is not one whose clamorous tongue can lay anything to his charge. Here is a divine dilemma: God must be just, yet he willed to save his people. How could these two things meet? Where was the man who could break down the mountain which separated justice

and mercy, so that they could kiss each other? God *must* punish sin, and yet he will be gracious to whom he will be gracious. How shall these two things agree? Forth came the priests, with their various sacrifices; but the slaughter of bullocks, and heifers, and rams, and he-goats could not make God just. What comparison could there be between rivers of the blood of fed beasts and the sin of man? But Jesus came, the great solution of the divine enigma: Jesus came, eternal God, but yet perfect man, and he bowed his head to the cross; his hands were pierced, his feet were nailed, his soul was sorrowful, even unto death: --

“Jesus, our Lord and God,  
Bore sin’s tremendous load,  
Praise ye his name;  
Tell what his arm hath done,  
What spoils from death he won;  
Sing his great name alone;  
Worthy the Lamb!”

God was just; he punished human guilt in the person of man’s representative, Jesus of Nazareth. God is gracious: he accepts every believing sinner for the sake of Jesus Christ. Think, then, of what Christ has done, and you will see the force of the argument. He has honoured the law of God, which man had dishonoured, and has opened a way for

God's mercy, which man's sin had fast closed up. Oh, God, thy Son has brought back what he took not away: he has taken the prey from the mighty, and the lawful captive he has delivered; like another David, he has snatched the sheep from the jaw of the lion, and delivered the lamb from the paw of the bear. Like another Samson, he has slain thine enemies, and taken the gates of their strongholds upon his shoulders, and carried them to the top of the hill. Every wound which he endured upon the cross, every stroke which he felt in Pilate's hall, every drop of blood which he sweat in Gethsemane, strengthens the plea-- "For Christ's sake."

Still, still I think I have not yet arrived at the force of the words. If any stipulation has been made, then the terms "for his sake" become more forcible, because they are backed by engagements, promises, covenants. In Christ's case solemn promises have been exchanged. There was a distinct engagement made between the Judge of men and the Redeemer of our souls, and the prophet Isaiah has published the engagement, "He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." Yet again, "I will divide him a portion with the great, and he, shall divide the spoil with the strong;" and still further, "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied. By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." There was a distinct transaction then of ancient date

between the Father and the Son, in which the Son stipulated that he would bear the sin of his people; he was to be the scapegoat for his people Israel; and then it was solemnly engaged on the part of the Divine Judge of all the earth, that he would give him the souls of the redeemed to be his portion for ever. No, brethren, there is strength in the plea, “for Christ’s sake.” Oh God, with reverence would we speak of thee, but how couldst thou be just if thou did not save those for whom Jesus shed his precious blood? Brethren, would you first accept a surety and substitute, and then expect the debtor to pay the debt himself? Look at human governments: if a man were drafted into the army and should find a substitute, does the law afterwards seize the man himself? And shall God be less just than man? Shall the supreme King of heaven be less just than the kings of earth? If Christ has paid my debt, payment God’s justice cannot demand of me; it cannot expect the same debt to be twice paid. Justice cannot demand payment--

“First at my bleeding surety’s hands,  
And then again at mine.”

If Christ served in that dread warfare for me as my substitute, how can it be that after this I should myself be driven to the edge of the sword? Impossible! Beloved, see that scape-goat yonder. Israel’s sins have been confessed

upon it. The high priest has laid his hand on the victim's head; it is led away by the hand of a fit man; he sets it free, watches it--it is out of sight. He climbs a rock, looks far away to the east, the west, the north, the south; he cannot see it; he waits a while, looks with anxious eye, it is gone! And he comes back and tells the people of Israel that the sin has been typically carried away upon the scape-goat's head. Now, Christ is the fulfilment of the scape-goat. Our sins were laid on him. He is gone--Gone where? "Ye shall seek me, but ye shall not find me," saith he: gone into the desolate regions of the dead. The scape-goat, Christ, has carried away into his own tomb the sins of all his people for ever. Now, was that a farce, or was it a reality? Did Christ take away sin, or not? If he did, then how can men be punished for sins which Jesus took away, for the sins for which Christ was punished? If he did not suffer for sin, then where is the deliverance for a soul of Adam born? Oh, you that receive general redemption, you know not what you receive; you who talk of a universal atonement which does not make an atonement for all sin, know not what you affirm; but we, who speak of a special atonement made for every soul that ever hath believed or ever shall believe, we speak of something sure, certain, worthy of the soul's resting itself upon, since it doth save every soul for whom it was offered up.

There remains only one other thought upon this point. It tends very much to strengthen the plea “for Christ’s sake,” if it be well known that *it is the desire of the person that the boon should be granted*, and if, especially, that desire has been and is earnestly expressed. Oh how glad we ought to be to tell that Christ, when we plead his name, never tells us that we are going too far and taking liberties! No, if I anxiously ask for mercy, Christ has asked for mercy for me long ago. There is never a blessing for which a believer pleads but Christ pleads for it too; for “he ever liveth to make intercession for us.” Our supplications become *his* supplications, and our desires when indited of the Spirit are *his* desires. In heaven he points to his wounds, the mementos of his grief, and he cries -- “Father, for my sake grant this favour to these poor undeserving ones; give them blessing as thou wouldst give me a blessing: be kind and gracious to them, as thou wouldst be kind and tender towards me.” This makes the pleas omnipotent. It is not possible but that it should mightily prevail with God.

2. Pausing a minute, let us enumerate *some few other qualifications of this plea by way of comfort to trembling seekers*. This motive, we may observe, is with God a *standing motive*; it cannot change. Suppose, poor sinner, that God offered to forgive for your own sake. Then if at one time you were penitent and broken-hearted, there would be hope for you; but at another time you might be

bemoaning the hardness of your heart and powerlessness to repent, and then there would be no motive why God should bless you; but you see Christ is always as much worthy at one time as another, and therefore God has the same reason for blessing you, a poor wandering soul, to-day, as he can have had twenty years ago, and if you have grown grey in sin, if you have become like a sere piece of wood ready for the fire, yet this motive does not wear out: it has the dew of its youth upon it. God for Christ's sake forgives little children, and for the same reason he can forgive the man who has passed his threescore years and ten. As long as you are in this world, this is a standing reason for mercy.

Remember, again, that this is *a mighty reason*. It is not merely a reason why God should forgive little sins, or else it would be slur upon Christ, as though he deserved but little. Canst thou tell how great thy sin is? "Oh," sayest thou, "it is high as heaven, it is deep as hell;" now canst thou tell how great Christ's worthiness is? I will tell thee that his worthiness is deeper than hell can be, and higher than heaven itself. What if thy sin could reach from east to west, and from the highest star to the depth of the abyss, yet the worthiness of Christ is a fullness which filleth all in all, and therefore it would cover all thy sins. Thy sins, like Egypt's hosts, are many and mighty; Christ's worthiness is like the flood of the Red Sea, able to drown the whole, so that not one of their host shall be left; they shall sink unto

the bottom like a stone. Thy sins are like Noah's flood, which drowned all mankind; Christ's worthiness is like Noah's ark, which swims above the tide and mounts the higher as the flood grows deeper. The deeper thy sin the more is Christ's merit exalted above the heavens when Jehovah forgives thee all thine iniquities. Think not little of Christ. I would not have thee think little of sin, but still think more of Christ. Sin is finite; it is the creature's act. Christ is infinite; he is omnipotent. Whatever then thy sin may be, Christ is greater than thy sin, and is able to take it away.

Then it is a most *clear and satisfactory*, I was about to say, most reasonable *reason*, a motive which appeals to your own common sense? Can you not already see how God can be gracious to you for Christ's sake? We have heard of persons who have given money to beggars, to the poor, not because they deserved it, but because they commemorate some deserving friend. On a certain day in the year our London Horticultural Gardens are opened to the public, free. Why, why should they be opened free? What has the public done? Nothing. They receive the boon in commemoration of the good Prince Albert. Is not that a sensible reason? Yes. Every day in the year the gates of heaven are opened to sinners free. Why? For Jesus Christ's sake. Is it not a most fitting reason? If God would glorify his Son, how could he do better than by saying, "For



the sake of my dear Son, set the pearly gates of heaven wide open, and admit his chosen ones. See these myriads of spirits, they are all admitted to their throne of immortal glory for the sake of my dear Son. They are happy, but they are happy for his sake. They are holy, but they are holy for his sake.” Casting their crowns at his feet, they sing, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.” You perceive at once that this reason appeals to common sense, and therefore I hope, dear friends, you will lay hold of it.

Let me say, poor sinner, that it is a reason *applicable to your case*. If you can--think of any one good and solid reason why God should forgive you! Turn them all over. You cannot see one! I know the time when I could not find half a reason why God should save me, but I could find fifty thousand reasons why he should damn me; but when I see that, “For Christ’s sake,” O that is a reason; that is a *good* reason -- it is a reason I can get hold of. Suppose me to be the blackest sinner out of hell, how it will glorify Christ if, for Christ’s sake, the blackest sinner that ever lived should be snatched from hell and taken to heaven for his sake. Suppose I have been a blasphemer, unchaste, an adulterer, a murderer -- what then? “For Christ’s sake.” The more sin I have, the more glorious will the merit of Christ seem to be, when, in opposition to all my unworthiness, it brings me

pardon and eternal life, and takes me to the enjoyments of his right hand. Sinner, grasp this motive. I know where you have been: you have been raking about in that filthy dunghill of your own heart. You have been turning the filth over, to find a jewel in it. You will never find one. The jewels which once belonged to mankind, were all lost by our father Adam.

I know what you have been doing. You have been trying to be better in order to deserve well of God. Thus you thought you would manufacture a reason which should move the heart of God. Leave off this foolish work; come with nothing in your hands but Christ. When the Molossians were threatened by their king to be cut to pieces for their rebellion, they pleaded very hard, but no argument would touch his heart till, one day, one of their ambassadors saw his son in the palace; catching him up in his arms, he took and laid him down before his father's feet, and said, "For thy son's sake have pity upon us." Now, do this, sinner, take Christ in thine arms and say, "For Christ's sake." The whole pith of the gospel lies here. All true theology is comprehended in this, "For Christ's sake." Substitution -- saving the guilty through the innocent; substitution -- blessing the unworthy through the worthy. Do try this precious plea, poor soul, and I will warrant thee that, ere long, thou shalt find peace with God, if thou canst understand the power of this argument.

I may close these reflections by observing, that this is *the only motive*, the only motive, which can ever move the heart of God. You may cry as long as you will, reform as much as you please, pray as earnestly as you like, but the gate of heaven will never stir to your knockings til you plead, “For Christ’s sake.” There is the “Open Sesame,” which will make the gates of the city turn on their hinges; but if thou hast not this watchword, all thy doings and almsgivings, and praying and what not, will be but a heap of filth, piled up against heaven’s gate. Do remember that “other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid,” and that “there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved,” save Jesus Christ the Righteous. Use that! Plead that, and you shall succeed with God!

II. “*For Christ’s sake,*” is the believer’s great motive for service. Two or three hints as to *what kind of service may be expected of us*; then a little exhortation by way of stirring us up to do this service for Christ.

1. We begin with *a few hints as to what service is expected of us*. One of the first things which every Christian should feel bound to do “for Christ’s sake” is *to avenge his death*. “Avenge his death,” says one; “upon whom?” Upon his murderers. And who were they? Our sins! our sins!

“Each of our crimes became a nail,  
And unbelief the spear.”

The very thought of sin having put Jesus to death should make the Christian hate it with a terrible hatred. I do not wonder that the Highlanders bit their lips and marched with awful determination and dread resolve of vengeance against the rebel sepoys when they recollected how the murdered women filled up the well of Cawnpore. Every man must have felt then that he was twenty men in one for retribution, and when his arm smote he wished to concentrate all the might of justice into each stroke of his sword. When I recollect that my sins tore my Saviour's body on the tree, took the crown from his head, and the comfort from his heart, and sent him down into the shades of death, I vow revenge against them. “O sin! Happy shall he be that taketh thy little ones and dasheth them against a stone,” yea, doubly blessed is he who, like Samuel, shall hew the Agag of his sins in pieces before the Lord, and not spare so much as one single fault, or folly, or vice, because it slew the Saviour. Be holy, be pure, be just, be ye separate from sinners for Christ's sake.

Then, next, the Christian is expected to exalt his Master's name, and to do much to honour his memory, for Christ's sake. You remember that queen, who, when her husband died, thought she could never honour him too

much, and built a tomb so famous, that though it was only named from him, it remains to this day the name of every splendid memorial -- the Mausoleum. Now let us feel that we cannot erect anything too famous for the honour of Christ -- that our life will be well spent in making his name famous. Let us pile up the unhewn stones of goodness, self-denial, kindness, virtue, grace; let us lay these one upon another, and build up a memorial for Jesus Christ, so that whosoever passes us by, may know that we have been with Jesus, and have learned of him. Should we not, for his sake, care for the growth of his kingdom and the welfare of his subjects? Ought we not to minister to the wants of his servants, and comfort the sorrows of his friends? If he has a poor brother anywhere, is it not at once an honour and a duty to aid him? As David cherished Mephibosheth, who was lame in his feet, for the sake of Jonathan, so should you and I look after every heavy-laden, faint-hearted Christian, for the sake of Jesus: bearing one another's burdens, because Christ bore our burden; weeping with them that weep, because Jesus wept; helping those who ask our help, because God has laid help upon one that is mighty, even our Redeemer.

And above all, "for Jesus' sake" should be a motive to fill us with *intense sympathy with him*. He has many sheep and some of them are wandering; let us go after them, for the Shepherd's sake. He has pieces of money which he has

lost; let us sweep the house, and light our candle, and seek diligently till we find them, “for Jesus’ sake.” Let the soul of the poorest little street Arab, let the soul of the grossest scoundrel and the most abandoned harlot be very dear to us “for Jesus’ sake.” Let us care even for the obstinate and rebellious, “for Jesus’ sake.” As you look at souls think you see *him* weeping over them, as you look at perishing sinners think you see *his* blood bespattered on them, and you will love them “for Jesus’ sake.” Oh, brethren, you who are doing nothing for Christ, who sit at his table and take the bread and wine in remembrance of him, what will you do when your Master comes, when you have to confess that you *did* nothing for him; your love was of such a sort that you never showed it; you talked of it, but you never gave to his cause, you never worked for his name? Out on such love as that! What do men think of it, a love that never shows itself in actions? Why, they say, “Open rebuke is better than secret love” of that kind; you had better have rebuked Christ than to have had a sneaking, miserable, untrue, unloving love to him, a love so weak that it was never powerful enough to actuate you to a single deed of self-denial, of generosity, or heroism, or zeal. Oh, let it not be so with us any longer, but let us seek by God’s grace that, “for Jesus’ sake,” we may have a sympathy with him in yearning over the souls of men, and endeavouring to bring them to a knowledge of his salvation.

2. *A few words, lastly, by way of exhortation* on this point. Clear as the sound of a trumpet startling men from slumber, and bewitching as the sound of martial music to the soldier when he marches to the conflict, ought to be the matchless melody of this word, "For Christ's sake." It ought to make men perform deeds which should fit them to rank with angels. It ought to bring out of every regenerate man more than was ever forced from manhood by any other word, let it have what charm it might. It ought to make the least among us valiant as David, and David as the angel of the Lord. Think what mighty wonders other words have wrought. *For philosophy's sake* what have not men suffered? They have wasted their health over unhealthy furnaces, breathing deleterious gases; they have worn out their days and their nights burning the midnight oil; they have spent their last farthing to acquire the secrets of nature, beggared themselves and their families to unravel mysteries which have brought no more substantial reward than the honour of learned approbation and conscious power. The martyrs of science are innumerable. If some one would write their story, it would make a bright page in human history. Think again of what men have done *for discovery's sake* by way of travelling. Take down the books of modern travellers and you will be astounded at their zeal, their courage, and disinterestedness. They have mocked the fever, have laughed at death, have left friends and kindred

and the comfort of home, have gone to inhospitable climes among more inhospitable men, have wandered about in weariness, wet with the rain, frozen with the cold, or burnt up with the heat, hungry and thirsty, sick and weary, have journeyed on and on to find the source of a river or a passage through a frozen strait. When I think of such expeditions as those of Ross and franklin, I marvel at and reverence the endurance of humanity; how these bold men have braved old Boreas in his own ice palace, and faced grim desolation in its own domain. The text, "Quit you like men," gets a new emphasis when we think of these conquerors of famine, and cold, and peril; and shall the inquisitiveness of mankind prove a stronger motive than God-given love to Jesus! If so, shame be upon us!

Think, again, of what men have done *for false religion's sake*. In years gone by the scimitar flashed from the Arab's sheath, and the Arab's eye flashed fire at the very name of Mahomet. For the one dogma, "God is God, and Mohomet is his prophet," blood flowed in rivers, and fields were strewn with the slain rejoicing to be slain, because they dreamed that Paradise was to be found under the shadow of swords. Think how the heathen cast themselves before the car of Juggernaut, to be crushed into a hideous mass, for their god's sake! Their filthy, horrid, god's sake! How many have given themselves to die by Gunga's stream! how many a woman has gone up to the



funeral pile, and thrown herself upon her husband's dead body, giving herself an offering to her cruel gods. I know not what men have not suffered for the horrid deities which they have chosen for themselves. Martyrs to fanaticism and deception are not a few, and shall the truth find us unready and unwilling to run risks for its sake!

Review, my brethren, *the heroic struggles of the Lord's people*, and here we turn to the brightest passage of the world's annals! Think of the suffering of God's people through the Maccabean war! How marvellous was their courage when Antiochus Epiphanes took the feeblest among the Jews to constrain them to break the law, and found himself weak as water before their dauntless resolve. Aged women and feeble children overcame the tyrant. Their tongues were torn out; they were sawn asunder; they were broiled on the fire; they were pierced with knives; but no kind of torture could subdue the indomitable spirit of God's chosen people. Think of the Christian heroism of the first centuries; remember Blandina tossed upon the horns of bulls and set in a red-hot iron chair; think of the martyrs given up to the lions in the amphitheatre, amidst the revilings of the Roman mob; dragged to their death at the heels of wild horses, or, like Marcus Arethusa, smeared with honey and stung to death by bees; and yet in which case did the enemy triumph? In none! They were more than conquerors through him that loved them! And why? Because they did

it all “For Christ’s sake,” and Christ’s sake alone. Think of the cruelty which stained the snows of the Switzer’s Alps, and the grass of Piedmont’s Valleys blood-red with the murdered with Waldenses and Albigenses, and honour the heroism of those who, in their deaths, counted not their lives dear to them “for Christ’s sake.” Think of our own Smithfield, the sacred spot where the martyrs leaped into their chariot of fire, leaving their ashes on the ground “for Jesus’ sake.” In Edinburgh, stand on the well known stones consecrated with covenanting gore, where the axe and the hangman set free the spirits of men who rejoiced to suffer for Christ’s sake. Remember those fugitives “for Christ’s sake,” meeting in the glens and crags of Scotia’s every hill, “for Christ’s sake.” They were daunted by nothing -- they dared everything “for Christ’s sake.” Think, too, of what Missionaries have done “for Christ’s sake.” With no weapon but the Bible, they have landed among cannibals, and have subdued them to the power of the gospel; with no hope of gain, except in the reward which the Lord has reserved for every faithful one, they have gone where the most enterprising trader dared not go, passed through barriers impenetrable to the courage of men who sought after gold, but to be pierced by men who sought after souls. Think of the Moravians, first and choicest of warriors for God. Think of them selling themselves for slaves, that they might teach other slaves the liberty of the

gospel; consenting to be confined in the lazar-house for life, with the absolute certainty of rotting away piece-meal with leprosy and with diseases fouler still, only that they might save the leper's soul, and have an opportunity of teaching to the poor diseased on the way by which his spirit might be made whole through Jesus the great physician. And what have you and I ever done? Oh, pigmies, dwarfs, sons of nobodies, our names will never be remembered. What have we done? Prayed at certain seasons, but with what little passion; talked now and then to sinners, but with what half-heartedness; given to the cause of Christ, but seldom given till we denied ourselves and made a real sacrifice; believed in God at times, but oh with what unbelief mixed with our faith; love Christ, but with what cold, stolid hearts. "For Christ's sake." Do you feel the power of it? Then let it be like a rushing mighty wind to your souls to sweep out the clouds of your worldliness, and clear away the mists of sin. "For Christ's sake," be this the tongue of fire that shall sit upon every one of you: "For Christ's sake," be this the divine rapture, the heavenly afflatus, to bear you aloft from earth, the divine spirit that shall make us bold as lions and swift as eagles in our Lord's service; fixed, fixed on God with a constancy that is not to be shaken, resolute to honour him with a determination that is not to be turned aside, and pressing on with an ardour never to be wearied.

I now leave this theme with you. How much owest thou unto my Lord? Has he ever done anything for thee? Has he forgiven thy sins? Has he covered thee with a robe of righteousness? Has he set thy feet upon a rock? Has he established thy goings? Has he prepared heaven for thee? Has he prepared thee for heaven? Has he written thy name in his book of life? Has he given thee countless blessings? Has he a store of mercies which eye hath not seen nor ear heard? Then do something for Christ worthy of his love. Wake up from natural sleepiness, and this very day do thou something in some way by which thou shalt prove that thou dost feel the power of that divine motive, “for Christ’s sake.” May God accept and bless you, “for Jesus’ sake.” Amen. -- CHARLES H. SPURGEON.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

HOW A PROPHET CAME TO PRAY AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA.

AFTER the death of the great king Solomon, you may remember how the people of God were divided into two nations, consisting of ten tribes and two, respectively, one called by the name of Israel, and the other by that of Judah. Now it is curious to note, that the larger division which kept the good old name had least of the character which the name expressed, as it was first given by God to Jacob. He got it, because he had strong faith to wrestle with the true and living God, and to prevail; because, therefore, he was a *prince with God*, which the word means. But the ten tribes, who kept the name of Israel, began their history with the worship of idol-calves in Bethel; and all through their course till they were made captives, they continued to be sad idolaters, like the heathen round about them. On the other hand, the people of the kingdom of Judah, with their kings, though they often did very wrong things, were, in the

main, faithful to the worship of the true God, till their last days when they fell off so that they also were sent into captivity, to learn painful but good lessons. The place where God was pleased to say his worship should be kept up, the temple which he was pleased to fill with his glory, and the ark in the holy, holy place, were in Judah. But God did not leave the ten tribes altogether; he sent many prophets to teach and warn them. Elijah was one of those; Elisha, who came after him, was another; and I have a story to tell you about one who lived at a later time than Elisha. It is a strange story, but strange though it be, it is true.

Jeroboam was the name of the first king of the ten tribes. But after a long time, another of the same name came to reign, and we speak of him as Jeroboam II, just as we say William II. of England, or Robert II. of Scotland. It was in the time of Jeroboam II. that the prophet I speak of was raised up in Israel. God sent messages by him to the people of Israel, and we know of one that told them how their king was to be a great man of war, and to win back cities that had been taken from his kingdom in the reigns of earlier kings. But when he was older, God told this prophet to carry a message to a far distant city, of which the name was Nineveh. That city was at the time very large, very powerful, and very wicked. So God said to Jonah, Go, and say to the people of Nineveh, that in forty days their city should be destroyed. God did this to warn the Ninevites; he

wished to spare them, if they would be sorry for their deeds and turn from them, and he sent his prophet to alarm them, and bring them to think of their sins, and to bring forth fruits meet for repentance.

The prophet's name was Jonah. Now being a prophet, one would think Jonah would no sooner hear God tell him to go, than he would get ready to set out on his journey. But whether it was that he was growing old, and, as old people sometimes become timid, was afraid to go; or whether he was bold enough to think that a prophet had no business to go to a heathen nation, and that he should preach to Israel only, it happened that Jonah would to obey God. So he thought of a very foolish thing. He said to himself, if I can get away far enough from this land of Israel, I can get away far enough from this land of Israel, where God looks down and speaks to prophets, I shall not be troubled with this hard command to carry a message to Nineveh, and some other person will be called to go. He resolved, therefore, to flee away by sea to some distant place, where he would not be before the Lord as he was in the land of Israel, but in the dark like the heathens. It was a very sad choice, and it was as foolish as it was wrong: indeed wrong things are always foolish. Jonah did not consider that, though going away from the land of prophecy might be easy, it was not easy to get away from the God of prophecy. Away, however, he went, down to a sea-port called Joppa, and finding a ship

ready to sail for Tarshish, which he thought, was far enough away, he asked to have a passage in it, and paid his fare, and went on board. Perhaps he was weary when he got into the ship, or perhaps he was ashamed of what he was doing, and felt as if any body looking at him would know it. At all events, he went down into the hold, and hid himself till the ship had sailed and was out at sea. Then thinking, I suppose, that he was now getting away from the presence of the Lord and was safe, he fell fast asleep.

God saw Jonah all the time, and he was preparing to wake him up, and to bring him back. Everything in nature does God's will; fire, hail, now, stormy wind. So he sent out a great storm into the sea; you know, I feel sure, what sea it was; if not, search for a Midland sea. The wind blew on the waters furiously, and the waves rose up till they were like little hills rolling along. The ship shook and tumbled, going up and down, and still the winds roared, and the billows rose. The seamen began to be afraid that the ship would sink, and they all called loudly on their gods to help them, but the storm blew on as wild as ever. At last the master of the ship thought of the passenger that he had on board; perhaps he could help them with his prayers, perhaps his God would be stronger or kinder. So he went down to where Jonah was lying, and shook him, and waked him, and said, you sleeper, do not you know that we are in danger of going all to the bottom? wake up, and call on your God,



that he may help us, if he can. It was a terrible waking up for Jonah. He did not count on this. He is on board ship, and both captain and crew at their wit's end, thinking that they could not help being drowned; and, worst of all, he heard God's voice in the storm, and knew that it had come on his account. O children, people hear such voices of storm often, often, in their souls, and know that troubles are sent because of them. But Jonah was now awake in two senses; his eyes were open, and his conscience was roused. So he rose at the captain's call, and standing among the seamen, he said, This storm is sent for me, I have been foolish and bad; I am a servant of the true God, and he wanted me to go and carry a message for him, and I would not go, but thought I would flee out of his sight, where he would not mind me, and ask somebody else. But see, his swift winds have come after me, and I have brought you all into danger. You must get quit of me; you must cast me into the sea. The men were very much astonished and vexed when they heard him say this, and for a while they would not think of throwing him into the sea. They rowed very hard to get to the shore, but the waves were too strong for them; and they had at length to give up, and do what Jonah told them. They took him up, and cast him into the raging waters. They were very sorry to do it; but there was something in Jonah's way of telling them what to do, as well as in the wildness of the storm, that drove them to the step they

took. When they had done it they were more filled with fear and wonder than ever; for they had scarcely seen his body sink under the waves, before the winds fell, and the sea became as calm as it was when they left the harbour. They said at once, The God of that man is the true God; we must serve him, and him only. So when they got to land, they offered sacrifices to the God of Israel, and paid the vows which they had made upon the sea. Wherever they went, also it is natural to suppose that they told the strange story of the terrible storm and the sudden calm, and the equally strange way in which the tempest had been quelled.

After he was thrown out into the deep, God still followed his foolish servant Jonah. I do not know whether the prophet expected to be drowned; but whether or no, God was kind to him. He had a great fish ready to swallow him, and keep him safe, till he should learn the lesson that had been given him, and be willing to go on the errand on which God had sent him. If you ask me how a man could live in a fish, I cannot tell you; I am not much concerned to guess whether it was in the fish's mouth, or in his stomach, that Jonah lay, or whether it was a whale or some other sort of fish that swallowed him. I know that God is quite able to do any thing that it pleases him to do; and I think he did for Jonah what he has not done for other men, and what, if we fell into the sea, we have no reason to think would be done for any of us. I think it was a miracle, and an only thing of

the kind, like Christ's burial and resurrection. It was something at the same time, like what will happen to us all, if we are God's true children, and are foolish enough to forget him, and sin against him. We shall find that wrong things done by us plunge us down into the deep, but that God's grace is strong to bring us up again. Jonah thought of this when he was down beneath the waves, and he cried to God out of the strange prison into which he had been cast -- cried to that God from whose presence he had been so anxious to flee. The Bible says, "Then Jonah prayed to God out of the fish's belly."

How he prayed, how he was answered, and what followed, must be told in another story.

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Where are we told about the secession of the ten tribes, leaving two only to the house of David?
2. When did Jacob get his name changed to Israel?
3. What was the name of the towns where the idol-calves were first made and worshipped?
4. What psalm tells us where God wished his worship to be kept up?

5. Can you find the place in the historical books of the Old Testament where Jonah's prophecy about Jeroboam is mentioned?

6. What prophet of the Old Testament writes all his prophecy about Nineveh?

7. Find a text which proves that God is better pleased when people repent and live, than when they go on in their sins and perish.

8. Find a text which shows that no one can go where God is not.

9. Can you find Joppa in the New Testament?

10. Can you find a text which shows that a bad conscience makes a man a coward?

11. Can you tell me of an innocent person who was sleeping on board a boat in a storm, and was awakened by those around him?

12. Who were the persons that on land called for many hours on their God, and got no answer?

13. What psalm describes to us something like what happened to the seamen in the ship where Jonah was?

14. Where does Christ compare his own burial to Jonah's being in the fish's belly?

15. What prophet was it that bade a man smite him, and because he would not do it, the man died?

16. What psalm speaks of a prayer sent up to God out of deep places?

17. What text in scripture shows that sin makes us fall, or sink down?

ANSWERS to the foregoing questions may be found by consulting 1 Kings xii.; Gen. xxxii.; 1 Kings xii.; Ps. lxxvi.; 2 Kings xiv.; Nahum i.; Ezek. xxxiii. and 2 Pet. iii.; Ps. cxxxix.; Acts x.; Prov. xxviii.; Matt.viii; 1 Kings xviii.; Ps. cvii.; Matt. xii.; 1 Kings xx.; Ps. cxxx.; Hos. xiv. Other chapters furnish answers to some of the questions.

---

*Prayer.*

O LORD, when thou speakest to us, may we always be ready to hear, and to do Thy will rather than our own. But when at any time we may have sinned, let us not try to hide our sin, but let us confess and forsake it, and according to Thy promise find mercy, for Jesus Chrit's sake. *Amen.*

---

## EVENING WORSHIP.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who hatest nothing that Thou hast made, and dost forgive the sins of all them that are penitent, create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, truly lamenting our sins, with unfeigned sorrow and abhorrence, and acknowledging our wretchedness with sincere resolution of amendment of life, may obtain of Thee, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness, and may at last be brought to the enjoyment of glory, honour, and immortality, through Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or PSALM* xcii. 12-15.

YOUR harps, ye trembling saints,  
Down from the willows take;  
Loud to the praise of love divine  
Bid every string awake!

Though in a foreign land,  
We are not far from home;  
And nearer to our house above  
We every moment come.

His grace will to the end  
Stronger and brighter shine:  
Nor present things, nor things to come,  
Shall quench the spark divine.

When we in darkness walk,  
Nor feel the heavenly flame,  
Then is the time to trust our God,  
And rest upon his name.

Soon shall our doubts and fears  
Subside at his control;  
His loving-kindness shall break through  
The midnight of the soul.

Blest is the man, O God,  
That stays himself on thee:  
Who waits for thy salvation, Lord,  
Shall thy salvation see.

-----

## JOHN XIV. 15-17.

IF ye love me, keep my commandments: 16. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; 17. Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. 18. I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you. 19. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. 20. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. 21. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. 22. Judas saith unto him (not Iscariot), Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? 23. Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. 24. He that loveth



me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me. 25. These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. 26. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. 27. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

#### JOHN XVI. 7-15.

NEVERTHELESS I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. 8. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9. Of sin, because they believe not on me; 10. Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; 11. Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. 12. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. 14. He shall glorify me; for he shall receive

of mine, and shall shew it unto you. 15. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

-----

*Prayer.*

OUR Father in heaven, we again come before Thy presence with thanksgiving, and worship at Thy footstool. Lord, give us a lively sense of Thy presence with us. Make us to feel that Thou God seest us, and that we are with Thee. This evening we have special reason for thanksgiving; enable us to pay our vows unto Thee. O let the memory of Thy past goodness be to us precious, and may our gratitude come up to Thee as a sweet perfume. We have had choice mercies, which we have not deserved. Blessed be our Lord, and may the God of our salvation be glorified! Whatever may be Thy providential allotments to us, teach us to regard them as coming forth from the Lord of Hosts, who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working. If in Thy wisdom seest affliction to be good for us, let us have the vinegar and the gall. Keep us from doubts and from hard thoughts of Thee. With growing experience, and having abundantly tasted that the Lord is gracious, may we

henceforth have a firm unwavering confidence in Thy fatherly love. Make us more fervent in prayer. Grant that our tempers may be softened, that our wills may be subdued, that our tongues may speak more to the edifying of one another in love, and that we may do more for Thee. Lord, grant us more success in Thy work, more wisdom as to the method, more sincerity as to the motive, more prayerfulness and dependence on Thee as to the results.

O Father, bless Thy church. May all Thy people be knit together in love; may their numbers be largely increased; may there be fewer backslidings among them; may they show more vehement zeal, more firm and sustained resolve in advancing Messiah's kingdom, and may their efforts be crowned with abundant success: then shall transgressors be taught Thy way, and sinners converted to Thee.

Hear the cry of such as be in trouble, and, out of darkness, bring them forth to the light. Let the rough places in their lot be made plain, and the crooked things straight. O Lord, save the sick who are in their own homes. Comfort and cheer their hearts in their sickness. Be in the hospital; in the sick-wards of workhouses; with all who are near to death. Give them the comfort of the Holy Ghost to sustain and carry them safely through their last earthly trial. And, O thou great Father and Shepherd of the sheep, let the very least and weakest of them be the objects of Thy

tenderest care. Hear these our prayers, for Christ's sake; and unto the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be glory, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. *Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

*Morning.*

**For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God:**

Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus;

Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness; that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay; but by the law of faith.

Rom. iii. 23, 24, 25, 26, 27.

*Evening.*

**Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.**

Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also:

Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.

Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

Rom. iii. 28, 29, 30, 31. Rom. iv. 4, 5.

## **TUESDAY.**

*Morning.*

**Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law.**

For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.

Gal. ii. 16. Gal. iii. 10, 11.

*Evening.*

**For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.**

Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference.

Rom. i. 16. Rom. iii. 20, 21, 22.

WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.**

Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.

Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

Isa. lxiv. 6. Rom. iv. 7, 8. Rom. v. 6.

*Evening.*

**Faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness.**

And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.

Now, it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him;

But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;

Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Rom. iv. 9, 22, 23, 24, 25. Rom. v. 8.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.**

For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he lieth, he liveth unto God.

Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

Rom. vi. 9, 10, 11, 12, 14.

*Evening.*

**What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.**

But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin; but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

I speak after the manner of men, because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness, and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants of righteousness unto holiness.

Rom. vi. 15, 17, 18, 19.



## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.**

For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.

Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.

For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded.

Gal. v. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10.

*Evening.*

**Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, so is the figure of him that was to come.**

For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.

Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness

of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

Rom. v. 14, 17, 18.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?**

Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight; that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.

Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts; and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free Spirit.

Job xxv. 4. Ps. li. 4, 5, 6, 9, 12.

*Evening.*

**Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers,**

Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

What! Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

For ye are bought with a price.

1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, 11, 19, 20.

# HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

## TWENTY-SIXTH WEEK.

### MORNING WORSHIP.

OUR Father, who hast given us thine only begotten Son, the brightness of Thy glory, and the express image of Thy person, to take our nature upon Him, and to be born of a pure Virgin, grant that we, being regenerate, and made Thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by Thy holy spirit; till Christ be perfectly formed in us, and we be made partakers of a Divine nature, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the same Spirit, ever one God, world without end.  
*Amen.*

### HYMN, *or Psalm* v. 1-7.

LORD, as a family we meet,  
Thy goodness to proclaim;  
We wait before thy mercy-seat,  
And plead the Saviour's name.

Weary and faint, by cares oppressed,  
We still are travelling on  
To that bright land of peace and rest,  
Where our Forerunner's gone.

Grant us thy cheering grace, O Lord,  
Thy mercy freely give;  
Speak by thy Spirit and thy word,  
That we may hear and live.

Pardoned, accepted, reconciled,  
Through Christ's atoning blood;  
May each one feel himself a child  
Of Thee, our Father, God.

#### EZEKIEL XXXVII. 1-14.

THE hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the Spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley, which was full of bones, 2. And caused me to to pass by them round about: and, behold, there very many in the open valley and, lo, they were very dry. 3. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest. 4. Again he said unto me,

Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. 5. Thus saith the Lord God unto these ones, Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: 6. And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord. 7. So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. 8. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them. 9. Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God, Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. 10. So I prophesied, as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. 11. Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. 12. Therefore prophecy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel: 13. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your

graves, 14. And shall put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live; and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord.

-----

*Prayer.*

ALMIGHTY Father! Hear us when we venture to approach Thee, through the mediation of Thy well-beloved Son. We bless Thee for Thy care over us during our past lives, and for that latest instance of it which this morning reveals. With more than a father's wisdom, and with more than a mother's tenderness, Thou has been "about our bed and about our path, and hast compassed all our ways." Accept our gratitude for life, for health, for friends, for all things which Thou hast given us richly to enjoy. Yet more for spiritual privilege and provision; for the gift of Thy Son, for the gift of Thy Spirit, for the holy sabbath, for the unsealed word of Thy lips. "The lines have fallen to us in pleasant places, and we have a goodly heritage."

We pray for grace, that our blessings may not condemn us. Thy Spirit has taught in our streets; may we never slight his warnings, nor neglect his great salvation. We are

exalted as were the cities of old. O help us to avoid their pride and indifference, that we may escape their doom.

We desire the sabbath-spirit to-day, that we may enter into Thy courts with thanksgiving and into Thy gates with praise; that we may be thankful unto Thee, and speak good of Thy name. Enkindle, O Lord, our gratitude and our faith. Give us the docile heart and the humble spirit; for “to that man wilt Thou look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at Thy word.” Let us go to Thy house to meet with Thee, and do Thou make the place of Thy feet glorious, and beautify the meek with salvation. Let all the services of Thy house be filled with Thee, and lead to Thee. May we not rest in the means. May we press through all that is outward and human, and see Thy face, and hear Thy voice speaking to us words of counsel, and comfort, and love. Anoint Thy ministers afresh from on high. Renew their commission; make them faithful men, fearing God above many; and clothe their word with the demonstration of the Spirit and with power. Turn about the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, and let Thy word be as a hammer which breaketh the rock in pieces, so that the most stubborn hearts may this day be reached and saved.

Bless us as a family. Our needs are known to Thee. Thou knowest our inner souls, and art acquainted equally with the fears that harass us, and the temptations which



beset our path. Make us strong to resist evil, and valiant for the truth upon the earth. Let Thy servants find grace in Thy sight, for we are poor and frail; and without Thee the good we would we do not, and evil that we would not, that we do. Look especially upon the young amongst us, and let the summer of their lives be Thine. Guard them from the world and from the evil one--from foes without and foes within.

Bless our land, our queen, and her illustrious house. From the throne to the cottage may peace and truth prevail, and may the nation's God be the Lord. We ask Thee for daily grace in daily need and trial. Go before us this day, as in the pillar of cloud. In the temple and in the closet be Thou our surety and our strength. Forgive our sins, even those of our holy things; and may we at last enter into the rest which remaineth, even that of the heavenly sabbath, for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O ETERNAL God, who art faithful and true, and according to Thy gracious promises hast raised up a glorious

Deliverer to us, who is the Lord our Righteousness; we beseech Thee to stir up the wills of Thy faithful people, that, bringing forth plenteously the fruit of good works, they may be a people prepared for the Lord. And we pray Thee, hasten His kingdom, when He shall reign, and prosper, and execute judgment and justice in all the earth. Grant this for Thine infinite mercies' sake in Jesus Christ, to whom, with Thee, O Father, and the Holy Ghost, be praise eternal. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* lxxii. 7-12.

HAIL to the Lord's Anointed!  
Great David's greater Son;  
Hail, in the time appointed,  
His reign on earth begun!

He comes to break oppression;  
To set the captive free;  
To take away transgression,  
And rule in equity.

He comes with succour speedy,  
To those who suffer wrong;

To help the poor and needy,  
And bid the weak be strong;

To give them songs for sighing;  
Their darkness turn to light,  
Whose souls, condemn'd and dying  
Were precious in his sight.

By such shall He be feared,  
While sun and moon endure,  
Belov'd, obey'd, revered:  
For He shall judge the poor,

Through changing generations,  
With justice, mercy, truth  
While stars maintain their stations,  
Or moons renew their youth.

### ISAIAH XLIX. 1-12.

LISTEN, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye people, from far; The Lord hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name. 2. And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the

shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me; 3. And said unto me, Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified. 4. Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain; yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God. 5. And now, saith the Lord that formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him, Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength. 6. And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth. 7. Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and His Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the Lord that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee. 8. Thus saith the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages: 9. That thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Shew yourselves: they shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places. 10. They shall

not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them. 11. And I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted. 12. Behold, these shall come from far; and, lo, these from the north and from the west; and these from the land of Sinim.

-----

## SERMON XXVI.

“BEHOLD MY SERVANT, WHOM I UPHOLD; MINE ELECT, IN  
WHOM MY SOUL DELIGHTETH,” &c.

--Isaiah xlii. 1-4.

WE find it easier, in human affairs, to discover a fault than to suggest a remedy. We complain without an effort; it is too natural to us to blame or to repine; it requires thought, time, sacrifice, to redeem or to amend. It is not so with the Scripture, which is the word of God. There, each word of rebuke is a means to an end. There is no exposure of evil to exhibit the censor's superiority. There is no delight in the merciless anatomy of sin. There is no mockery of distress by the presentation of sorrow that is hopeless, or leprosy beyond cure. Equal to the need, and surpassing it, present

as soon as the need is felt and acknowledged--there is the redemption. To illustrate this thought you have only to look at the verses immediately before the text. They give us God's view of the world's need -- the absence of wisdom and manliness inevitably resulting from idolatry, the folly of character, the failure of plan, the chaos of thought, the utter and hopeless abandonment of a world without God. "For I beheld, and there was no man; even among them, and there was no counsellor, that when I asked of them, could answer a word. Behold, they are all vanity; their works are nothing: their molten images are wind and confusion" (Isaiah xli. 28, 29). Now, so soon as we have realized this necessity, while the heart is yet pining under the sadness which the thought of it has created, the bright light is in the clouds, and in the midst the vision of the Redeemer. "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my Spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law." It does not need that we should enter into argument as to the reference of this passage to Christ and his great work in the world. We feel instinctively that the words could refer to no other,

and it strikes upon us, as a matter of course, that they should be quoted by St. Matthew in the twelfth chapter of his Gospel, and expressly applied to Jesus. Without misgiving or controversy we may enter upon our meditation, suffering our thoughts to flow around this central figure, and seeking to discern its beauty, while we consider --

- I. *The need of the world.*
- II. *The designation of its Deliverer.*
- III. *The manner and issue of his work.*

I. *The need of the world* is affirmed in this passage to be the bringing forth or establishment of God's "judgment." The word has many senses in the Scripture, but there are three to which we may especially refer you. In Psalm cxlvii. 19, 20, it is thus written: -- "He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation: and as for his judgments, they have not known them." Here the term is used of the precepts of God's law, that direct and unquestionable revelation which he has given of his word and will. In Isaiah i. 17 we find it: -- "Learn to do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow." And similarly in Luke xi. 42:--"Woe unto you,

Pharisees, for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and love of God.” Here it evidently stands for righteousness, essential rightness, that which is just and true, alike towards man and God, the high moral excellence which is the ideal of character, and which the weary world has almost broken its heart in fruitless endeavours to attain. Then, in Psalm cxix. 20: -- “My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times;” and in the quotation of the text in Matthew’s Gospel, it would seem to have reference to the dispensation of grace -- the “power of God unto salvation,” the provision of might and mastery for human feebleness and struggle. Now if we think of these meanings for a moment, we will discover, couched in them, the world’s strongest necessities to-day. Take the first thought. It is needful surely that there should be a bringing forth of “judgment” as a revelation of God’s word and will. Who that looks abroad upon the world but must mourn over the bewilderment and confusion of its inhabitants in relation to the things of God. Where there is no revelation there is obscure or distorted vision, and the people perish. If it were possible to conceive of a world without a Bible, and consequently without a standard of authority; in the spectacle of wayward and active mind, with no restraint upon its folly or frenzy, there would need no darker conception of hell. Who that looks into his own heart, and frets himself with the many



problems of existence which the human hath no skill to solve, can forbear the longing for a higher wisdom, for a voice which can make itself heard, and which, when heard, can silence the babble of strange tongues, and in imperial tones proclaim to us the true? In matters of lower moment, we would often flee from the restlessness of licence to the tyranny of some strong thinker's power. The mind longs for rest, when chafed by its endless doubts as the wave upon the rough strand, and from its tumult and passion the earning has been often breathed -- "Oh for the light of the Divine!" This yearning is answered when the judgments of the Lord -- "true and righteous altogether" -- are revealed unto men. The nature need no longer pine, nor wander aimlessly among the speculations of the ages. The feebleness is assured by the nearness of a directing hand, and the pride is humbled by the authority of an unchallengeable law. God hath spoken, and every cavil must be silenced, and every question may be answered in his words. Once convinced that the voice is God's voice, we have no choice but to obey. When He speaks, it is not an opinion, it is a fact. He does not reason. He pronounces, enacts, declares; and the hushed world should listen and be still. The want of the intellect, bowed beneath the sense of its own ignorance, and yet keenly avaricious of knowledge, is met in the Divine law. That law shows man in his dependence, in his fall, in his mysterious possession of a life

from which he cannot rid himself, and in the destiny which fills the future of his being. That law shows God in his character, in the magnificence of his enthronement, in the bend and stoop of his mercy towards those who have offended Him, in the precept which enjoins obedience, and in the promise which gives the strength to render it. That law brings these revelations of man and God together, discloses, in simultaneous discovery, the need and the remedy, and makes it possible for every man to flee from his trouble to his Redeemer, and to find the rest and happiness of being in the knowledge of the “only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom He hath sent.”

If we take the next meaning of the word “judgment” -- essential rightness -- none will deny that in this also a great want of the nature is supplied. The nobility of the Eden-inheritance, by which the powers of the soul were in accord with each other, with the external world, and with God, how sadly has it been tarnished by the fall! The original derangement, how thoroughly has it infused itself into every part of the universe, and into every faculty of the man! To a thoughtful individual there is nothing more melancholy than the alternate alienation and longing of the mind towards the holy and pure. It has been well said, “Man can neither renounce his sins nor his God.” He flees from the Deity he worships. He is a slave to the sins that he condemns. There are contradictions in his nature which

he cannot reconcile -- a war in his soul deadlier than of the tented field. He has longings after purity, but they are stifled by his habits of evil, and have seldom vent, as a jewel might flash for a moment from some foul refuse-heap of a city, only to excite the stranger's covetousness, or his wonder how it had got there. Hence it is that man's religious history is so eccentric and unsatisfactory. He cannot acquiesce in evil, but he is fitful and languid in his endeavours to be good; and until Divine grace has wrought mightily upon his heart, he is by turns attracted and repelled from godliness, rapid as the comet in the heavens in his aversion and approach to the sun. His master-want is holiness; but how to reach it he finds not. His heart, convulsed with tumultuous passions; the nations, groaning under the cupidity of the selfish and the insolence of the tyrant's wrong; the world, prostrate in a moral decrepitude, and forced by its religions into still fouler impurity -- all long for the establishment of the right "They look to the earth and behold trouble and darkness, and dimness of anguish." There is no light, no hope. Through the long darkness the eyes strain toward for the glimpse of the day; the people linger trembling until the tables are given; "the isles wait for the law;" the universal conscience cries out for its coming, and for lack of it "the whole creation travaileth together until now."

Consequent upon these two wants of the nature, “judgment” as a revelation of the law, and “judgment” as a habit of righteousness, there is created the third, “judgment” as a dispensation of power, because ignorance and impurity are helpless and “without strength” until “in due time Christ died for the ungodly.” By unaided effort ignorance cannot acquire knowledge, nor pollution be cleansed from its stain. There must be a power by which the scales are shed from the eyes and the warp from the mind; by which the law becomes a life, and the soul is filled with its ecstasy, and enabled to discharge its obligation; by which the nature is rescued from its inherited feebleness, and made “valiant for the truth upon the earth.” Without the revelation of this power, all other would be an aggravation of the torture, as the sunlight on the shroud seems but a gay mockery of the death it robes. The bringing forth of judgment which is declared to be “to open the blind eyes,” is declared also “to bring out the prisoners from the prison;” and the effect of the Saviour’s mediatorial work is described as the “judgment” of this world, and the casting out of its prince from his usurped dominion. As the special anointing for the great work of deliverance, God says of Christ -- “I have put my Spirit upon Him” That Spirit is a spirit of power. Where He works there can be blindness and feebleness no longer; the lame shall leap as an hart, and the darkened eye revel in a new sense of beauty;

the leper shall be as a child in comeliness, and the sepulchred shall be alive from the dead.

Here, then, are the wants of the man and of the world met by the bringing forth of judgment from the Lord. Longing soul, who art panting for heavenly knowledge, poor chained one, in the fetters of thy sin, paralyzed at the pool-side, hopeless upon the very brink of the Bethesda, here are healing and comfort for thee. No conflict of opinion -- here is rest for thy mind in the standard of unerring truth. No conflict of passion -- here is rest for thy soul in the purity and justice of the throne. No conflict of fear, and foreboding, and despair -- here is rest for thy heart in the tenderness of "strength and peace." Truth purity, happiness for all, from the bringing in of the judgment of the Lord.

And not only are the wants of the individual, but of the world, comprised in this purpose of mercy. He who brings in the judgment is the Harmonizer, for whom the nations have waited; the Royal Prince, to whom is committed the arbitration of all things; the source and spring of the earth's unutterable peace. The world needs nothing "save Jesus only." all it wants meet in the person of its Surety. Let Him work to the completion of his purpose, and Aceldama must bloom into Paradise. All social wrongs will vanish; the monopoly and the oppression, the sources of poverty and the sources of quarrel, will disappear from the earth

which they have cursed so long. All religious evils will be ended. Scepticism will not shake the faith, nor blasphemy curdle the blood. Fanaticism will no longer be grafted upon the reasonable service of the gospel; men will rejoice in the white light of truth, and blush that they have been accustomed to obscure or to distemper its rays; charity will be no longer a fugitive, housed by stealth in hearts warmer than their fellows, but her rejoicing shall be in the habitable part of the earth, and her spirit the inspiration of the kingdom “which cannot be moved;” for He shall reign whose right it is, and Christ shall be all in all. And the world craves this day; men have strong faith that it will come; they know that there is that in themselves which can be made willing to receive it when it comes; and all the moaning which now swells out, like the thunder of the waves upon the shore, into a prayer hoarse with the burden of wrong and sorrow, will be turned into a psalm as He appears; for yet, as by the olden city of Nain, a word from his lips can turn a dirge into the anthem of a bridal.

II. There are certain particulars upon which it may be well briefly to dwell as to the *terms* which are here applied to Jesus, the world’s Deliverer, and which abundantly show the harmony of counsel in the godhead touching the great work of man’s rescue from ruin. We find, in the first place, that Christ is called “the servant” of the Father. In at least three other places in this prophecy is this term used. In

Isaiah lii. 13: “My servant shall deal prudently. He shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.” In Isaiah liii. 11: “by His knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.” Again, in Isaiah xlix. 6: “It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel. I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the ends of the earth.” It is evident from these passages that our Lord is called the servant of the Father in reference only to his mediatorial work. He is not essentially a servant. He “took upon him *the form* of a servant,” and, with glad heart and willing feet, went forth to do a servant’s work. There was confided to Him a task which no other could accomplish; and to rebuild the dismantled temple of Jehovah, and to secure for Him a higher revenue of honour, and to make possible for Him his grandest attribute of forgiveness, and at the same to to uplift and save a world which had “destroyed itself” by sin, He laid his glory by. Christ is called, again, the “elect,” or chosen of God, in whom his soul delighteth; or, as Matthew renders it, almost in the very words in which the Father attested the Son from heaven, “My beloved, in whom I am well pleased.” If proof were wanting of his essential equality with the Father, and that He was “Emmanuel, God with us,” we might surely find it here. Though in the form of a servant, He had the heart and love of a son. He was

chosen to this work because none other was trustworthy. The world would have remained in hopeless ignorance of God, unless “the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father,” had himself “declared Him.” He only could “perfect for ever, by one offering, them that are sanctified.” He only could be the world’s “peace, making both one, and breaking down the middle wall of partition between them.” He was not only chosen to this work; but oh, deeper mystery of tenderness! beloved on account of this work. Deep and everlasting as had been the love of the Father to the Son, it was intensified on account of this. “*Therefore* doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life for the sheep;” as if the redemption of sinners had struck a deeper chord, and evoked a more exquisite affection, than had arisen from the complacencies of a past eternity, or from the wisest and most skilful administration of the worlds.

To complete this harmony, we have to remind you that the Divine Servant, thus chosen and beloved, was the subject of especial anointing from the Spirit. To this the text refers: “I have put my Spirit upon him.” Again, in Isaiah xi. 1, 2: “There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots: and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.” Again, on that remarkable occasion in the synagogue of Nazareth, the Saviour quotes the words of



Isaiah lxi. 1, 3: “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor,” and then startles his listeners by their decisive application to Himself -- “This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.” We gather from these passages that in unmeasured fullness the influences of the Spirit were upon Christ, to hallow and to counsel, to sustain and to make mighty, every act of his incarnate life. Although He knew no sin, and therefore needed no renewal, yet even his sinless human nature needed the anointing of the Spirit to enrich it with all suitable qualifications, and to make it strong for service or for suffering; for even in its highest embodied possibility human nature cannot do without God.

Now taking these three thoughts, we have a sight that may well enkindle our most rapt and reverent wonder; the sight of the whole Deity at work for man. We see the Father, not stern and implacable, as some gloomy theories present Him, but graciously willing the recovery of the lost, arranging the whole scheme of redemption “according to his good pleasure which he had purposed in himself;” and, in unexampled tenderness, offering, in the costliest sacrifice, his only-begotten Son. We see the co-equal Spirit, content mediatorially to proceed from the Father and the Son, delighting in the gentler manifestations of his energy, shedding his bright baptisms upon Jesus without measure or grudging, stooping from his throne to woo the stubborn

sinner to Himself, descending like the dew of the morning into the heart of childhood, and of the blasphemer, the beggar, the felon; lifting up those who should be peers for angels, and of the household of God. We see the Divine Son choosing to be humiliated, and despised, and smitten, entering into that mystery of sorrow which human intellect shudders even to conceive, refusing no labour nor sacrifice, but obedient alike in his loving ministry and in his atoning death; “delighting” in agony as men delight in home; knowing no pleasure so sweet as that of snatching brands from the burning; loving the humanity which he had wedded so well that he took it with him into heaven, in order that all other humanity might not feel strange and lonely in the sky; and watching in tireless solicitude, and pleading in ceaseless advocacy, for the earth He has ransomed still. Oh! Nowhere in the universe is there to be seen a sight like this. All of the energies of heaven engaged to save a sinner! Let us look on it, that our rebellion may be hushed, our unbelief and indifference scattered at its presence. We may crouch and tremble before heathen gods, which only smite their worshippers; we may shrink like the guilty things we are, when the Lord’s pure presence surprises us in our forbidden delights; we may be awed when Sinai shakes “beneath the dark pavilion spread, of legislative God;” we may be bewildered into fear as we dwell upon each grandeur and marvel of creative power; we may sink into our own

nothingness before that insufferable purity to which the heavens are not clean: but the vision which is here presented to our view should awaken other feelings than these. God asks and claims our love. He is not satisfied with distant reverence, and cold obedience, and faultless service, He wants regard, and trust, and clinging. He cares not for the courtier's knee; he longs for the child's heart; and He has revealed Himself in the mysterious unity of the Trinity thus tenderly that --

“The mild glories of his grace  
Your softer soul may move  
Pity Divine in Jesu's face  
To see, adore and love.”

III. We direct attention briefly to the manner and issue of the Redeemer's work. There are four thoughts suggested by the passage --

First, we are told that he works *unostentatiously*. “He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street.” Is not this in keeping with all the characteristics of the Saviour? Pretenders vaunt insolently of their claims, and are elated by a momentary triumph. He is “meek and lowly in spirit.” His heart beats with even pulses, whether the palm branches are strewed in his path or the thorns are twisted for his crown. False christs are

turbulent and haughty, “boasting themselves to be somebody.” He withdrew from the royalty which the people would fain have forced upon Him, and charged the healed demoniacs that they should not make Him known. Political demagogues raise tumults for selfish ends. He had no war with Caesar, forbade the sword to his disciples, steadily discountenanced the risings of their patriot pride, and impressed upon them that in the diviner monarchy, which was above trappings and legions, he reigned as King for ever. And so quietly has Chritianity spread its influences upon men. Not the whirlwind, the earthquake, the pestilence, but the dew, the seed, the leaven -- things which work quietly, mighty forces, resistless from the might of their silence -- these are its emblems. The kingdom of God commonly cometh not with observation. Physical convulsions may precede it. The whirlwind of passion and the earthquake which shaketh the nations, and the fire, consuming to all olden wrong and all encumbering circumstance, may be the couriers of the gospel; but it speaketh in the “still small voice,” that majestic whisper which always makes a silence for itself, however loud and rude the strife or crying makes its way into the conscience of the world.

We are told, again, that this work is done *tenderly*, with the utmost mercifulness and long-suffering. “A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall

he not quench.” What a beautiful representation of the perfection of gentleness is here drawn for us! Let the images live before us. The dying night-lamp, glimmering ghostly through the darkness in the sick-room, when all the world is still; the oil dried up, the last leap of the flame, the curling smoke the only and offensive trace of recent fire -- a kindled lamp for all purposes of utility gone out. Again, the banks of some solitary tarn, with a dreary moorland all around it, the shrill cry of the bittern the only sound that breaks upon the dumb, dead air; and there by the sluggish pool a reed, the sport of the fierce wind, bruised by many tempests, very frail, very lonely, about the most friendless and uncared-for object in the world. If man were in question, how would the bruised reed and smoking flax be treated? Would not the surly hand quench the one, and the rude foot of the wayfarer trample the other? But He, who is gentler and kinder than man, props the reed and fans the flax, until the one becomes strong in Jehovah’s strength, and the other a flame burning brightly and cheerily to his praise. Poor soul, ready to halt through all the days of thy pilgrimage over whom storms have swept pitilessly, and scared from thy side the help of human friends -- poor soul, who hast the memory of a brighter religious life, stifled by worldly care or evil passion, thy heart an altar where no fire has been kindled, there is comfort in the word for thee. The Saviour is great in gentleness, his mightiest energy is to

redeem and save. “A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench.” And so tenderly does He watch over the progress of the gospel in the world. He bears with infirm purpose, and does not always chide the rash or hasty deed. To Him the day of small things is but the promise of a glorious future. He is not impatient of growth nor of fruit. He gives time for the blossoming above, and for the clasping of the broad roots below. He is not fretted by the heathen’s rage nor by the people’s vanity. In the most degenerate Israel He sees the seven thousand faithful, who have never bowed the knee to Baal, and He waits to be gracious to the proudest rebel, and does not spurn the humblest beggar, and has room in his heart for the affections of the simplest child.

We are told again that this work is done *perseveringly* and *successfully*: “He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.” It is a plain and unmistakable prediction. Judgment shall be set in the earth, and “the isles shall wait for his law.” This is a settled matter, which risen Saviour sits expecting to realize, and which the faith of believers may anticipate on the warrant of his word. The years may come and go with but little apparent progress; the armies of the enemy may be as gaily caparisoned and as boastful of victory; the fortresses may seem to be without a breach; the scorers may be loud in their ribaldry; the standard-bearers

may be stricken, and the banner itself soiled with dust and stained with blood; but there is not the interval of a moment in the Saviour's march to triumph. Calm as the sun in the heavens, He bringeth forth judgment unto victory.

Noiseless but constant as the flight of time, He presses to his assured purpose, and waits for the expected end. He is not discouraged by sinister omens or unwonted opposition, by faithless traitors or by wearied friends. None of the ordinary causes of failure operate in Him. Men fail because they underrate difficulties and make no careful counting of the cost, or because they work without a heart and consequently without a will, or because there is a misgiving that the work is unworthy, or because death touches them suddenly in the midst of their toil. He saw the end from the beginning, calculated every danger, measured the stature and strength of every enemy. He loved the work so well that, for its sake, he delighted in the baptism of the fire. He feels the work to be the noblest, the highest destiny for man, the most magnificent revelation of God. He ever liveth, and only hath immortality. "He shall not fail nor be discouraged." Against embattled earth and gathered forces of the pit he shall bring forth judgment unto victory, until He rests from his labour, until He gathers his children, until He wears his crown. -- W. MORLEY PUNSHON, M.A.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

HOW THE PROPHET, RISEN FROM THE SEA, PREACHED AT  
NINEVEH, AND WHAT FOLLOWED.

WHEN Jonah was thrown out into the sea, it is not wonderful that he should have thought God had cast him out of his sight. He tells us himself that this was his first thought. And I think he does not mean merely that this might be death, if he means that at all, but that he feared God was throwing him away for his great sin. But when he found that he was strangely preserved in the waters, and thought back on all that had happened, he began to hope, and look up again to God in prayer. It was a strange place of prayer he had, but the cry of an earnest heart will reach God's ear from any place; and God heard Jonah from "the deep," "from the midst of the seas." If you read the prophet's prayer, you will find that it speaks first in the tone of distress and affliction, but it closes with words of praise. Jonah now expected to be delivered. So, on the third day, when the fish carried him to the shore, and placed him safe on the dry land, he felt that he had new and great reasons for trusting that God who had pardoned him, and



kept him, and hearkened to his cry. When you read the prayer, it is proper to notice this -- that it is written in the form of telling us afterwards what the prophet had prayed, not in direct words of prayer used at the time.

Now that Jonah has been corrected for his sin, and restored to his place, will he obey God next time he told to go and preach? You expect that he will; and you are glad to think that he does go at once, when told, to the very city he would not go to before. A second time God said to him, Go to Nineveh, and preach what I shall bid thee; and Jonah got up and set out on his journey. By and by he reached the place, and found that it would take him three days to go quite through the city, and preach so that all might hear, it was so very large. But he began his work and for a whole day, passing along the streets, he cried, In forty days Nineveh shall be destroyed. It was a bold thing to do, but God was with his prophet, and no one set on him to hurt him. More than that, the people began to listen eagerly; one told another about the terrible message brought by a stranger, and the whole city was filled with fear. The very king was told about what was happening, and instead of sending to have Jonah taken and scourged, or imprisoned, or killed, he was made to feel that the warning cry must be true, and he said to all about him, We must call on God for mercy. He himself put off his royal robes, and put on rough sackcloth, and sat down on the ground on ashes. He made

all his nobles do the like, and then set out a decree from himself and them, that neither man nor beast was to taste food or drink, but all were to fast and pray to God to pity and spare them. What a sight it must have been to see! a whole city, as it were, lying before God, and beseeching his mercy. It is not said that Jonah preached more than one day. I suppose he saw it was not needful, and soon God told him that he had taken pity on the people, and seeing that they were turning from their sins, he would not destroy the city.

You are, perhaps, wondering how the king of Nineveh and his nobles, and his people came so readily to believe Jonah's preaching. What did they know about him, that they should suppose his word to be true? I cannot answer the question so as to make you sure about the way it happened, but some things may be stated as very likely. Of course, God's hand was in the matter; and when he is pleased to do it, hearts will be moved with fear, or raised to faith. Then the consciences of the wicked Ninevites was on the side of Jonah's preaching. They felt that they deserved to be destroyed, and that made them fear that the awful warning, which told them how in six weeks the city would perish, might be true. There was even more than this; in some way or other, they came to know that Jonah was a prophet of the Lord. Christ tells us that he was a sign to the people of Nineveh -- something in the same was that he

himself was to be a sign to the Jews, by being buried and rising again. This makes me think that the men of Nineveh had come to know that Jonah had been cast out into a raging sea, and must have come up again from the deep or from the dead. Perhaps the seamen that threw him overboard had gone to Nineveh after they themselves landed, and had told the strange story of the storm, and how it was laid. If they were still in the city when Jonah came to preach, they would tell the people that he was the very man they had thrown into the sea with their own hands; and after that all who heard him would feel that that they were listening to one who had come to them as if he had risen from the grave. In whatever way it was brought about we knew they believed God, repented of their deeds, and were spared. But it was only for a time. The people went back to their sins, and at last their city was taken, and laid in ruins. By and by where the great Nineveh had stood, there were only waste and desolation, and green mounds covering the heaps that were scattered all over the plain. Out of these of late years strange remains of the old grandeur have been dug, and Nineveh has been speaking to us, as Jonah spoke to her, like one risen from the dead.

How did it fare with Jonah when God told him he was going to spare the city? Surely he would be very glad, and give God thanks that his preaching had been blessed to alarm the people, and to bring them to repentance. I am

sorry to say this was far from being the case. The prophet was very angry. God's goodness gave him very great displeasure. I suppose he thought his own honour as a prophet was at stake; and that people would say, his big words have not come to pass after all. That comes of thinking about ourselves, rather than God; and about our own things, rather than those of others. One cannot help asking, Would Jonah have liked to see Nineveh consumed like Sodom? It would almost seem so: for after he had complained to God about his pity, which he now hints was the reason why he had fled at first, he went and sat on a hill to the east of the city to watch and see what would become of it. It was a very sad and strange thing for Jonah to plead God's mercy as a reason why he did not like to carry a warning message of wrath; but in his passion he did this. See how blind rage makes a man, and how madly bold too! God bore with his foolish servant wonderfully, and taught him a lesson which, let us hope, brought him to a better state of mind. Jonah had made a little booth for himself to sit in, and God made a gourd to grow up and cover it with the shadow of its fresh green leaves, and the prophet was very glad of the cool shelter. But God made a worm to smite it so that it withered, and then he sent a hot fierce wind, and it beat burningly on Jonah's head, and he fainted and said, I wish I were dead. God spoke to him, and asked, Are you right to be so angry for the gourd? And when the

passionate man said, Yes, I am quite right, quite right! God answered him, and rebuked him by saying, You pity the gourd, though it was not yours; it cost you no labour, it grew of itself: you pity the gourd, though it be but a short-lived plant: should not I pity Nineveh, with its hundreds of thousands of men and women and children, all my creatures, beside the multitudes of cattle? Let us hope he was brought to say, Yes, Lord, it was right that thou shouldst pity them and spare them. Pity and pardon me, Lord!

### QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Do you know the name of a king who prayed to God from the cell of a foreign prison, and was heard?
2. Can you find a text in which a prophet speaks of praying from a deep prison?
3. What other prophet than Jonah did God bring back when he had fled from his post, and bid him do his work again?
4. What people was it that were often miraculously delivered, and as often sinned again?
5. What prophet was it that carried a message against an idolatrous place and spoke it boldly in the presence of a king?

6. Where do we read about a king, who, on rending his outer garment, was seen to be wearing sackcloth underneath?

7. What king was it that lay fasting for a week upon the ground?

8. Can you find a passage in which Christ tells the people of his day that they were worse than the Ninevites?

9. Where does Jesus tell us that Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites?

10. Can you find a text in the New Testament which bids us to look on the things of others, not on our own?

11. Do you know a beautiful promise in which Christ is represented as sheltering from the heat?

12. Where are rich men compared with grass and flower under the sun and a burning wind?

ANSWERS to the foregoing question may be found by consulting 2 Chron. xxxiii.; Lament. iii.; 1 Kings xix.; Ps. lxxviii; 1 Kings xiii.; 2 Kings vi.; 2 Sam. xii.; Matt. xii.; Luke xi.; Phil. ii.; Isa. xxxii.; James i.

-----

*Prayer.*

O LORD God, we rejoice that Thou art merciful and gracious, and art willing that even the worst of men should turn from their sins, and be forgiven and live. We pray that we never be left to feel sorry when thy threatened judgments are turned away by men repenting. We beseech Thee to keep us from indulging angry passions, and answering hastily and hotly when our feelings are moved. We praise Thee for Thy great forbearance towards us, and that Thou hast not dealt with us as we have sinned. Keep us from abusing Thy long-suffering. May we with all our hearts bless Thee for the sign of the risen Saviour, rejoicing that the message he brings to a sinful world is a message of mercy and love --glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, goodwill towards men. O that all men may soon hear it and believe it. This we ask for the Redeemer's sake.

*Amen.*

-----

## EVENING WORSHIP.

ALMIGHTY God, who hast given Thine only Son to be unto us both a sacrifice for sin and also an example of godly life, give us grace that we may always most thankfully receive that His most inestimable benefit, and also daily endeavour to follow the blessed steps of His most

holy life, that dying unto sin, and living unto righteousness, we may at last obtain eternal life, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* lxi. 1-5.

JESUS, Lover of my soul!

Let me to thy bosom fly,  
While the raging billows fly,  
While the tempest still is high!

Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,  
Till the storm of life is past;  
Safe into the haven guide;  
O receive my soul at last!

Other refuge have I none;  
Hangs my helpless soul on thee;  
Leave, oh! Leave me not alone;  
Still support and comfort me.

All my trust on Thee is stay'd;  
All my help from Thee I bring;  
Cover my defenceless head  
With the shadow of thy wing.



## ACTS IV. 23-25.

AND, being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. 24. And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that is in them is; 25. Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things. 26. The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. 27. For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, 28. For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. 29. And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak they word, 30. By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus. 31. And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all

filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness. 32. And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul; neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. 33. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. 34. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold. 35. And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

#### ACTS V. 12-16.

AND by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people: (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch. 13. And of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them. 14. And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women;) 15. Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might over-shadow some of them. 16. There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto

Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.

-----

*Prayer.*

O LORD our God! we come again into Thy presence as the day declines. We prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried, for we hoped in Thy word; and again at even-tide will we cry unto Thee, for Thy mercy and for Thy truth's sake. As the eyes of servants unto their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress, so our eyes wait upon Thee, until that Thou have mercy upon us. Let us again realize Thy presence. Bless us with mercy to pardon. Bless us with grace to help in this our time of need. We thank Thee for the audience which Thou hast given us in Thy house. Thy word has been sweet to our taste. We have sat under Thy shadow with delight. Thou hast come near to us while we have come near unto Thee. Lord, forgive whatever has been unworthy in the motive, or imperfect in the service we have endeavoured to render. We are not consciously insincere, but who knoweth his errors? Cleanse Thou us, O God from secret faults. The thought of Thy presence awes and humbles us. O, make us

that we shall not be banished from Thy fellowship, nor afraid to look upon God.

Grant that the words which we have heard to-day may linger in our memories and influence our lives. Help us to walk consistently before the world. Save us, O Lord, for we are weak, and the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and our ancient enemy lieth in wait to betray. Hold Thou us up, and we shall be safe; strengthen us by the might of Thy Spirit in our inner man. Out amongst men, acting with the world's citizens, reasoning with its reasoners, taking our part in the duty of every day, may we be strong with an inner strength; may we walk in the light, as children of the light and of the day. May our conduct approve our confession, that the world may take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus.

Let all who are dear to us be dear to Thee. Gather our friends into Thy fold. Teach us to be faithful to those who are yet out of the way, that by our persuasion and example we may win them for Christ. Deliver us from blood-guiltiness, O Lord, Thou God of our salvation.

Where Thy truth has been proclaimed this day let a blessing from on high follow it. Let the message of reconciliation reach and soften many a prodigal heart, bring back the wanderers home, and let those who have been thoughtless hitherto be led to seriousness and prayer.

We commend ourselves to Thy fatherly keeping this night. The darkness and the light are both alike to Thee. Watchman of Israel, screen us from harm and from sin. Underneath and round us place Thy everlasting arms. Let us lie down in peace, and sleep, because Thou only makest us to dwell in safety. Renew our strength for life's toil and duty. Give us a manly piety and a generous faith. We are frail and erring, but Christ hath died. We rest on His atonement. We plead his ceaseless and fragrant intercession. Have respect unto Thine anointed, and for His sake grant us light, and peace, and life, and to Thy name we will render praise. *Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

#### *Morning.*

**Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.**

But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh;

That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Gal. iii. 24.      Gal. iv. 4, 5, 6.      Rom. viii. 3, 4.

#### *Evening.*

**He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.**

Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night.

He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.

Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord is thy keeper; the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand.

The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.

The Lord shall preserve thy going out, and thy coming in, from this time forth, and even for evermore.

Ps. xci. 1, 5.      Ps. cxxi. 3, 4, 5, 6, 8.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.**

Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.

Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

Fret not thyself in any wise to do evil.

He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty: and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.

Eccles. vii. 8, 9.    Rom. xii. 12, 14.    Ps. xxxvii. 8.    Prov. xvi. 32.

*Evening.*

**In your patience possess ye your souls.**

For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.

For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.

For the Lord will not cast off forever.

Luke ii. 1, 19. Heb. x. 36. Heb. xii. 1, 3. Lam. iii. 26, 31.

## WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.**

O love the Lord, all ye his saints; for the Lord preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer.



Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.

For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.

I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.

Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness because of mine enemies: make thy way straight before my face.

Job x. 12. Ps. xxxi. 23. Ps. cxvi. 7, 8, 9. Ps. v. 8.

*Evening.*

**Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.**

Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:

But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst: but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more.

Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money: come ye, buy, and eat: yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price.

Matt. v. 6. John iv. 13, 14. Rev. vii. 16. Isa. lv. 1.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**Tribulation worketh patience.**

We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

Rom. v. 3. John xvi. 33. Acts xiv. 22. Rev. vii. 14. Heb. xii. 6.

*Evening.*

**The glory of the Lord shall endure for ever: the Lord shall rejoice in his works.**

Bless the Lord, all his works, in all places of his dominion: bless the Lord, O my soul.

Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.

For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him.

My meditation of him shall be sweet.

Ps. civ. 31. Ps. ciii. 22. Acts xv. 18. Col. i. 16. Ps. civ. 34.

## FRIDAY.

### *Morning.*

**Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?**

For all the gods of the people are idols: but the Lord made the heavens.

Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.

For God is the King of all the earth; sing ye praises with understanding.

God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness.

Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.

Exod. xv. 11. 1 Chron. xvi. 26. Ps. xxx. 4. Ps. xlvii. 7,8. Ps. xlv. 10.

### *Evening.*

**Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.**

As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby;

If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it.

Ps. viii. 2.      1 Pet. ii. 2,3.      1 Cor. iii. 1, 2.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works.**

To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved.

Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of person:

But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

A sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God.

Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

Eccles. ix. 7.   Eph. i. 6.   Acts xxxiv. 35.   Phil. iv. 18.   1 Cor. x. 31.

*Evening.*

**For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.**

For he that is dead is freed from sin.

Now, if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.

For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.

I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Col. iii. 3. Rom. vi. 7, 8. Gal. ii. 19, 20.

# HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

## TWENTY-SEVENTH WEEK.

### MORNING WORSHIP.

O GOD, the strength of all them that put their trust in Thee, mercifully accept our prayers; and because through the weakness of our mortal nature we can do no good thing without Thee, grant us the help of Thy grace, that we, steadfastly believing in Thy Son Jesus Christ, and loving one another as He hath given us commandment, may please Thee both in will and deed, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

### HYMN, *or Psalm* cxxxix. 1-10.

LORD, thou hast search'd and seen me thro';  
Thine eye commands, with piercing view,  
My rising and my resting hours,  
My heart and flesh with all their powers!

My thoughts, before they are mine own,  
Are to my God distinctly known  
He knows the words I mean to speak,  
Ere from mine opening lips they break!

Within thy circling power I stand:  
On every side I find thy hand;  
Awake, asleep, at home, and abroad,  
I am surrounded still with God!

Amazing knowledge! -- O the height!  
'Tis far above my highest flight;  
My soul, with all the powers I boast,  
Is in the boundless prospect lost!

O may these thoughts possess my breast,  
Where'er I rove, where'er I rest!  
Nor let my weaker passions dare  
Consent to sin, for God is there!

### JOB XXVIII.

SURELY there is a vein for the silver, and for gold where they fine it. 2. Iron is taken out of the earth, and brass is molten out of the stone. 3. He setteth an end to darkness,

and searcheth out all perfection; the stones of darkness, and the shadow of death. 4. The flood breaketh out from the inhabitant; even the waters forgotten of the foot: they are dried up, they are gone away from men. 5. As for the earth, out of it cometh bread; and under it is turned up as it were fire. 6. The stones of it are the place of sapphires; and it hath dust of gold. 7. There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen: 8. The lion's whelps have not trodden it; nor the fierce lion passed by it. 9. He putteth forth his hand upon the rock; he overturneth the mountains by the roots. 10. He cutteth out rivers among the rocks; and his eye seeth every precious thing. 11. He bindeth the floods from overflowing; and the thing that is hid bringeth he forth to light. 12. But where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding? 13. Man knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living 14. The depth saith, It is not in me; and the sea saith, It is not with me. 15. It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire. 17. The gold and crystal cannot equal it; and the exchange of it shall not be made for jewels of fine gold. 18. No mention shall be made of coral, or of pearls: for the price of wisdom is above rubies. 19. The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure gold. 20. Whence then cometh wisdom ? and where is the place of understanding? 21. Seeing it is hid



from the eyes of all living, and kept close from the fowls of the air. 22. Destruction and death say, We have heard the fame thereof with our ears. 23. God understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof. 24. For he looketh to the ends of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven; 25. To make the weight for the winds; and he weigheth the waters by measure. 26. When he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightening of the thunder; 27. Then did he see it, and declare it; he prepared it, yea, and searched it out. 28. And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.

#### PSALM LXXVII. 12-20.

I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings. 13. Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary; who is so great a God as our God? 14. Thou art the God that doest wonders: thou hast declared thy strength among the people. 15. Thou hast with thine arm redeemed thy people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph. 16. The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee; they were afraid: the depths also were troubled. 17. The clouds poured out water: the skies sent out a sound: thine arrows also went abroad. 18. The voice

of thy thunder was in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook. 19. Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known. 20. Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

-----

*Prayer.*

LORD, teach us how to pray; and forasmuch as we know not what to pray for as we ought, pour down upon us, we beseech thee at this time, the spirit of grace and of supplication. Our voice shalt Thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning of this thine own day do we direct our prayer unto Thee, and look up.

We adore Thee, O Lord; for thine is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty. Thou deckest Thyself with the light as with a garment; and the hosts of heaven worship Thee. To Thee all angels cry aloud, the heavens and all the powers therein. To Thee cherubim and seraphim continually cry, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of sabaoth. We too, O thou glorious Jehovah, would approach Thy throne of grace in the name of Jesus;

and by Him would offer our sacrifice of praise, giving thanks to Thy name.

We praise and bless Thee, O Father, for thy preserving care over us during the past night. We laid us down and slept, and have risen again, for Thou, Lord, hast made us to dwell in safety. We bless Thee for the renewal of all our faculties of body and mind; our sight and hearing; our speech and reason. We thank Thee for the peace and quietness of the sabbath day--blessed emblem and foretaste of that eternal rest which remaineth for the people of God. And O, above all, we adore and magnify Thee for the blessings of redeeming grace, and for the gift of Christ, the Son of Thy love, to take on Him our nature, to bear our sins in His own body on the tree, to die the just for the unjust, to make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness, that we might be accepted in Him. O Lord, make us exceedingly thankful; and give us, we beseech Thee, that due sense of all Thy mercies that we may show forth our heartfelt gratitude, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to Thy service, and by walking before Thee in holiness and righteousness all our days.

But we confess, O heavenly Father, that we have not rendered to Thee according as Thou hast dealt with us. We are poor and miserable sinners, both by nature

and practice. We have done what we ought not have done, and we have left undone what we ought to have done. By thought, word, and deed have we sinned against Thee, O Lord. Every day we add to the number of our transgressions; they have mounted up to heaven, and, as a heavy burden, they have gone over our heads. If thou wert extreme to mark what is done amiss, O Lord, who could abide it? Enter not into judgment with Thy servants, for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified. We plead the promises of Thy word. We rely on the infinite merits of Christ. In Him hast Thou provided a way of escape. He is the ever-open door, the ever-living way; and Him hast Thou set forth a propitiation, through faith in His blood, and hast declared Thyself ready and willing to receive all who come to Thee in His name. We lay our hands, by faith, on His sacred head; we ring the burden of our guilt to the foot of His cross; we lay our sins on Jesus. Wash us, we pray Thee, in the blood of that immaculate Lamb, which was slain to take away the sins of the world. Grant us joy and peace in believing; sprinkle our hearts and consciences afresh with the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel. Clothe us with the spotless robe of His perfect righteousness, and accept us in the Beloved.

We need also, O Lord, the renewing and sanctifying influence of Thy Spirit. Quicken us, we beseech Thee, in Thy way. Grant us the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ. Open the eyes of our understanding, and fill us with the knowledge of Thy will. May Christ dwell in our hearts by faith; and may we be filled with all the fulness of God. Bless us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places; increase our faith, enliven our hope, and pour into our hearts more of that love which passeth knowledge. Thus may we go from strength to strength in our heavenly course, ever looking unto Jesus, and out of His fulness receiving grace for grace.

We ask Thy blessing also, gracious God, on all Thy people in every place. Wherever two or three are gathered together in Thy name this day, on mountain side or lowly plain, in crowded town or lonely cot, in distant isles or on the broad sea, be Thou in the midst of them, to hear and bless. Regard with Thy favour all the members of this family, and may they belong to the household of God. Command Thy special blessings upon all Thy ministering servants at home or abroad, and crown their labours with abundant success. Gather, out of all lands, a people to praise Thee; yea, hasten the time when all the kingdoms of the world shall become Thine by willing consecration, and all

nations shall come and worship before Thee. Take to Thee Thy power and reign, O blessed Jesus; pour out Thy Spirit upon all flesh, and let living waters go forth from Jerusalem. O let the wilderness and the solitary place be glad for them; let the desert rejoice and blossom as the rose.

And now, we commend ourselves to Thy care and blessing this day. May we feel Thy presence near us. Anoint us with fresh oil from the upper sanctuary; and in Thy good time receive us into those mansions of eternal bliss which Thou hast prepared for all who love Thee; through the merits of Jesus Christ, our only Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O God, whose infinite mercies in our blessed Saviour encourage us to call upon Thee, we beseech Thee graciously to hear us, and grant that we may both perceive and know what is Thy good, and acceptable, and perfect will revealed to us, and also have grace and power so faithfully to fulfil the same, that we may

present ourselves a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable  
unto Thee, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* l. 9-15.

LORD, I confess thy rightful claim,  
And yield to thy command;  
To own thy dear, thy powerful name,  
I here rejoicing stand.

To thee, my Saviour and my Lord,  
I my whole self resign;  
By thee to life and hope restored,  
I will be ever thine.

Thy merit shall my refuge be  
From God's avenging hand;  
Thy Spirit shall my spirit free  
From sin's impure command.

Here to his influence and sway  
I offer up my mind;  
Thence let him cleanse the filth away,  
Nor leave a spot behind!

Let him each dull affection move,  
And melt my frozen heart,  
Through all my soul diffuse thy love,  
And life divine impart!

Then with unwearied zeal shall I  
The best design pursue,  
Shall stand resolved for heaven and thee,  
And every foe subdue.  
DEUTERONOMY XXVI. 12-19.

WHEN thou hast made an end of tithing all the tithes of thine increase the third year, which is the year of tithing, and hast given it unto the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that they may eat within thy gates, and be filled; 13. Then thou shalt say before the Lord thy God, I have brought away the hallowed things out of mine house, and also have given them unto the Levite, and unto the stranger, to the fatherless, and to the widow, according to all thy commandments which thou hast commanded me: I have not transgressed thy commandments, neither have I forgotten them. 14. I have not eaten thereof in my mourning, neither have I taken away ought thereof for any unclean use, nor given ought thereof for the dead: but I have hearkened to the voice of the Lord my God, and have done according to all that thou hast commanded me. 15. Look down from thy holy habitation, from heaven, and bless thy people Israel, and the land which thou hast given us, as thou swarest



unto our fathers, a land that floweth with milk and honey. 16. This day the Lord thy God hath commanded thee to do these statutes and judgments: thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thine heart, and with all thy soul. 17. Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgements, and to hearken unto his voice: 18. And the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldest keep all his commandments; 19. And to make thee high above all nations which he hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour; and that thou mayest be an holy people unto the Lord thy God, as he hath spoken.

### MALACHI III. 1-11.

BEHOLD, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold he shall come, saith the Lord hosts. 2. But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when

he appeareth? For he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap; 3. And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord, an offering in righteousness. 4. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years.

5. And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hirelings in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the Lord of hosts. 6. For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. 7. Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return? 8. Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. 9. Ye are cursed with curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. 10. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I

will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. 11. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before her time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts.

## ROMANS XII. 1, 2, 9-12.

I BESEECH you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. 9. Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. 10. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; 11. Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; 12. Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer.

-----

## SERMON XXVII.

“THE LORD HATH NEED OF THEM.” --Matt. xxi. 3.

WE have here one of those pregnant sentences of Christ, so full and suggestive in their varied application, which are so richly scattered through the Gospels. Called forth by some trivial circumstance, and apparently intended only with special reference to the time and occasion, they are not sooner uttered than they appear to have been intended for all time. The more they are studied and pondered over, the more profound and weighty they are seen to be. We can turn them on all sides, and view them in varied lights; and as we gaze, their relations widen out until at length they seem to comprehend almost everything in their vast embrace; like some of nature's laws, so simple as it were in their first elements, but on investigation found to pervade all the phenomena with which we are conversant, until at length the most widely differing results are all found to be but different manifestations of the one grand principle. These words form, as we know part of the directions given

by Christ to his two disciples, when he sent them for the ass and the colt on which he was about to enter Jerusalem in triumph. Anticipating, however, an objection on the part of the owner, he said, "If any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, the Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them."

Without dwelling on the striking proofs which this passage incidentally affords of the essential Deity of Christ, in thus not only manifesting the prescience which is God's alone, and the magic power over human hearts which the Creator only can exercise, we pass on to the words themselves -- "the Lord hath need of them."

There is *no waste* in the economy of nature. We may not always be able to trace out the uses of this or that particular object; but we are confident of the truth of the principle. There withered branch, the shrivelled leaf, the broken shell on the pebbly beach, the ashes of the embers that have been burnt, the smoke of the living coal, are not going to waste. They are entering into the new combinations, going to form new products for the welfare and beauty of the whole, of which they form but a part.

"Gather up the fragments which remain, that nothing be lost, "were the words of Him who had just exhibited his power to multiply the five loaves into a sufficiency to satisfy the cravings of five thousand men, besides women and children. We are too apt to think but lightly of the value of

what we call trifles; the odd seconds of time, remnants of opportunities, parings and savings, how recklessly are they thrown away or neglected! And yet we know that the coral reef is built up by the tiny labours of microscopic creatures, in a manner almost imperceptible, until at length, emerging from the bosom of the deep, it forms a beauteous island for the habitation of man, and to be adorned with a luxuriant vegetation. The heaviest snow storm that ever buried the cottage of the peasant beneath it, came down in single flakes, each one so softly that it could scarcely be felt. The mightiest avalanche, which ever carried death and destruction in its wake, was composed of single particles separately harmless; the colossal pyramids of Egypt, the palaces and temples of Rome, were built up stone by stone; and the longest life of man, even that of Methuselah, was made up of seconds of time. Oh how little do we realize the value of the *littles*! how seldom do we remember, as we let days and opportunities and precious talents pass by without improvement, that “God requireth that which is past.” It may be thousands of years after, but it is required sooner or later. We ourselves often require to-day what has been laid aside in some forgotten drawer for years; but it comes forth again to the light, and is applied to its use. The same analogy pervades all nature. A seed, a stone, a stick, may lie for many years apparently useless; but the appointed time comes on when it is required, and some apparently

accidental circumstance calls it into notice, and it is at once applied to the end for which it was all along designed. What an importance, yea, almost a sacredness, is thus impressed on all and everything we see. No one thing stands absolutely alone. Things the most insignificant imaginable are every day found to be necessary conditions to something else of the very utmost importance; and we cannot divest ourselves of our personal and individual responsibility in reference to them, whether we would or not. They are around and about us, and we are in the midst of them. They touch us on every side. It is in our power by an act, a word, or a look, to set in operation a train of circumstances which may have eternal consequences; or we may neglect to stretch forth our hand at the proper time, and then the opportunity is lost beyond recall for ever.

But let us look a little more closely into the pregnant principle which the text contains -- "The Lord hath need of them."

The principle embodied in these words is this -- That the Lord is pleased to require the services of his creatures, even the very meanest.

In one sense indeed he needs nothing. He has made of one blood all the children of men. Neither is he worshipped with men's hands as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all, life and breath, and all things. All the beasts of the forest are his, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.

The silver and the gold are God's for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the heavens above, the earth beneath, and the waters under the earth, all are his, for he made them. Cherubim and seraphim, angels and archangels, depend on him for creation and preservation: his smile is their joy, their happiness. How then can it be said with truth that the infinitely blessed God needs the services of his creatures? Before the worlds were made, he dwelt alone in the fulness of beatific bliss; Father, Son, and Spirit rejoicing as triune Jehovah in their own self-sufficiency. "Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth; while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. Then I was by him, as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him." "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." These are the words of the eternal Son, proving that the Fountain of being stood in no need of created existence to minister to his happiness.

But, on the other hand, there is still a sense in which the words of the text have a blessed reality. God was pleased to call creation into being. That creation is one harmonious whole, consisting of an infinite variety of individual existences, animate and inanimate, organized and unorganized, intelligent and non-intelligent; rocks, seas, mountains, and rivers; animals, plants, and insects; man,



angels, and celestial hosts. All this wonderful variety and countess diversity God has impressed with a no less wonderful unity, wherein part answers to part; and each individual, no matter how small or insignificant, fulfils and important function with respect to some other and the whole. According to the constitution and course of nature, therefore, which God has been pleased to set up -- according to the actual economy of his providential kingdom -- God is pleased to require the services of all his creatures for the purposes for which he has created them.

In this point of view, there is a use for every star in the blue sky, every shell in the depths of ocean, every grain of sand on the the sea-shore. Not a leaf in the forest, nor a blade of grass in the meadow, but God requires them all. All are to set forth his glory, all bear the impress of his infinite wisdom, power and beauty. The heavens declare his glory, the firmament showeth his handiwork. If this be so of the inanimate world, how much more so of man and all the intelligent creation? The Lord has need of them, we may say, not indeed to minister to him, but to minister to each other, and glorify their Creator by the prompt and willing discharge of the special function and office for which he created them.

To apply this principle more immediately to man, having made us, the Lord has need of us; that is, requires us to live to his glory. "This people have I formed for myself,

they shall show forth my praise.” These words were spoken of Israel after the flesh; they are still more applicable to the Israel of God, and not untruly set forth the original design of man’s creation. When God formed man out of the dust of the earth, he created him in his own image, after his own likeness. He impressed on him the stamp of his divine original, and set him over the inferior creatures, to be lord and ruler of this lower world -- God’s vice-regent, for their good and the Creator’s glory. The fall has not impaired the original rights of Jehovah. Yea, now more especially, regard being had to the actual state of the moral world, we may say, the Lord has need of our services.

*I. He requires our hearts.*

The Lord has need of them, to love him and serve him with all the power and affection of which they are capable. “My son, give me thine heart.” God will not have less. Vain is mere lip-service and the homage of the outer man. We indeed judge after the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart. The state of the heart is everything. There may be the most elaborate ceremonial and the most gorgeous ritual in public worship: there may be the most scrupulous attention to countless minute particulars in private devotion -- the closed eye, the subdued voice, the accurately repeated form of words; but all will not make up for the absence of the heart. If any man be in Christ he is a new creature. Unless a man be converted and

born again he cannot even see, much less enter, the kingdom of God. This then is the first grand need, without which all other things are valueless -- the homage and surrender of the heart. This is more valuable than offerings of gold and silver; more fragrant than the odour of flowers and the perfume of incense. Have we given our hearts to God? Have we given our affections to him? Do we love him? Alas! how many are there who bear the Christian name, and yet who love him not. And yet St. Paul said, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ let him be Anathema Maran-atha." Why was this dreadful sentence pronounced? Because if we love not Christ, we love not God; and if we love not God, where God is we cannot come. We would not be happy there if we could. Love to God and Christ, then, are an infallible mark of the children of God. Constrained by a sense of his love, they adore his grace and mercy. They were lost by nature, without God, without Christ, and without hope in the world; but God so loved us as to send his Son to bleed and die in our stead. By his glorious sacrifice on the cross of Calvary he has made a perfect propitiation, oblation, and satisfaction for our sins; he made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in an everlasting righteousness. He was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. And now the believer in Christ feels that he is not his own; he is bought with a price, redeemed not with

corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. He no longer lives to himself, but to him who loved him and gave himself for him. He seeks to glorify God in his body and in his spirit, which are God's.

Such is the wondrous and sublime, yet simple process, by which man is now led to love God and render to him the homage of the heart. He needs not to pretend to repeat or continue that one sacrifice once offered, once for all, finished for all time on the cross, by the one only priest; he needs not bring to that cross any fancied merits of his own, as a make weight either to the merits of Christ or the sufficiency of faith. He has but to hold out the hand of his thankful acceptance of the unspeakable gift, and receive of Christ's fulness grace for grace. "Faith," saith Hooker, "is the only hand which putteth on Christ to justification, and Christ is the only garment which, being so put on, covereth the shame of our defiled nature and maketh us acceptable to God."

In Christ, then, God descends to man, and in Christ man ascends to God. The Son is the expression, exhibition, and manifestation of his Father's love; the Son is the object of the believer's regard. "Whom having not seen," saith Peter, "ye love." For he is chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. Touched then by the mighty magic of his

love, let us yield ourselves to God. For we love him because he first loved us.

II. *The Lord hath need of our intellects, our reasoning powers.*

The service of the gospel is a reasonable service. We are ready always to give an answer to every one that asked us a reason of the hope that is in us. At the present time the truth of the gospel is fiercely assailed in the name of a science falsely so-called, and by a superficial philosophy. Now God approves not of a blind, superstitious devotion, but rather calls for the exercise of all our intellectual faculties. The works of the Lord are great, sought out; that is, inquired into, investigated by, all them that have pleasure therein. How constantly and how beautifully did David, the inspired psalmist, call on all his members to praise God. What intense delight did he take in contemplating the wondrous works of God. How does he invite all inanimate nature even to bow down before the majesty of Jehovah: woods, hills, and vales; dragons and all deeps; wind and storm, snow and hail, sun and stars--all are called on to join in one universal anthem of praise.

The intelligent study of the works of God and the word of God should be the constant employment of the redeemed soul. We need not seek to be wise above what is written, and we may not be content to fall short. The books of creation and revelation are given us by our Father to study,

that therein we may trace his footsteps and the imprint of his love. Now more than ever, when ungodly men are calling into question the truth of revelation, the Lord has need of able defenders of his cause. We have to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, and by sound doctrine we must be able both to exhort and convince the gainsayers. St. Paul was set for the defence and confirmation of the gospel. In our respective spheres we must do the same in this ungodly age, when the enemy is coming in like a flood. Let us then consecrate our intellects to God -- our memories to be stored up with his precious truths; our reason to understand, contemplate, and defend his cause; our imagination fondly to dwell upon the bright prospects of the better land, and the many mansions in our Father's house.

### III. *The Lord has need of our bodies in his service.*

Fearfully and wonderfully are we made, curiously wrought, as it were, in the lower parts of the earth. True religion is not merely spiritual, nor only intellectual. It is not a series of mere spiritual intuitions, nor a chain of intellectual demonstration. It is an active service. There is work for all the powers of the body, as well as all the faculties of the soul and all the affections and emotions of the spirit. The Lord has need of them all for his service. "I beseech you therefore," says St. Paul, "that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice to God, which is your reasonable

service.” It is but reasonable that the wondrous organism of the human frame should be dedicated to God. It is his temple. The ivory palace of the brain; the bright glance of the eye, reaching to the remotest bounds of space; the curious convolutions of the ear quick to catch the faintest sound of melody; the tongue of eloquence to speak for God; the hand of skill to work for him; the foot of speed to run willingly in the race set before us -- the Lord has need of them all. See how all were employed by Paul in his Master’s cause. His was the foot which never wearied; his the hand which never slacked: the tongue of eloquence, the pen of power, the eye of intelligence, the ear and heart of Christian sympathy -- all were his, and in constant play for the glory of his Saviour and the welfare of his fellow-creatures.

Ever let us remember that the body is redeemed, as well as the soul. It is the member of Christ, and must therefore be kept pure. It is to share in the future glory, for we wait for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body; this corruptible must put on incorruptibility, this mortal must put on immortality. We look for the Saviour from heaven, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body. The whole man then is redeemed, the whole man in his wondrous complexity, body, soul, and spirit; and the Lord is pleased, in the gospel of his grace, to have need of them all.

#### *IV. He needs our gold and silver.*

Under the Old Testament the Lord directed a tabernacle, and afterwards a temple, to be made. The workmanship of both was of costly materials, gold and silver, and purple and scarlet, and precious stones, onyx stones and glistening stones of various colours, and marble stones in abundance. Under the new dispensation he requires our means, though not exactly for the same purposes. Souls are to be converted and brought to Christ. The millions of the heathen are perishing for lack of knowledge; thousands of street Arabs are growing up without education, no one to care for their souls; the streets and alleys, the cellars and garrets of our town populations stand in need of the utmost efforts of Christian philanthropy, to bind up the broken heart, smooth the sick pillow, cool the fevered brain, pour light into the hearts and homes of the destitute, and to bring the weary, world-despised wanderer into the blessed precincts of the fold of Christ. For all this we need the silver and the gold of Christian men and Christian women. The heralds of the cross are ready to go forth; the ministering angels of charity and peace are on their blessed mission. We want but means to be multiplied a thousand fold in order, under the blessing of God, to turn the wilderness into a paradise, the desert into the garden of the Lord, to plant the myrtle, the oil tree, and the box tree together, yea, to open rivers in high places



and fountains in the midst of the valleys. The silver and the gold are mine, saith God. Let us prove him now herewith, and see if the Lord will not open the windows of heaven and pour us out a blessing which there shall not be room to receive. Alas! Christian people have yet to learn that it is *more* blessed to give than to receive.

V. *The Lord has need of our influence.*

Oh, influence is a wonderful thing. We cannot see it, nor feel it with hands, nor hear it; yet it is in constant operation all over the world. It is like the attraction of gravitation, or some of the imponderable fluids or mysterious agents of nature. It is always at work -- silently, insensibly, but so powerfully! There are none so poor, or so feeble, who are not the source of this secret power to a greater or lesser degree. The unconscious babe, the outcast pauper, the invalid, the dumb, the blind, all exert influence. From them emanate streams of mysterious agency, the nature and operation of which surpass our powers fully to understand. We can but recognize the fact. All the world over, in every rank of society, hearts, and wills, and characters are being moulded and framed and fashioned by the influence which unconsciously flows forth from every living creature. Like the circumambient atmosphere by which we are surrounded, or the light of heaven with which we are bathed, and which pervades and

acts upon all within the sphere of its operation, so the wondrous play of influence acts and reacts on all the individuals of society.

The Lord has need of it for His service. Let none underrate the transcendent importance of this talent. We each influence a sphere, of which we are the respective centre. The higher our station the greater our influence, and consequently our responsibility. Even when we are absent it is in operation. Many a man has had an influence, by way of example or warning, on hundreds whom he has never seen in the flesh, nor ever will until he meets them at the bar of God. In this way we are directly responsible for the formation of character in respect to thousands of whom we have never heard; for influence is transmitted through the medium of others. All the gifts and talents we possess are the source of influence, the full value of which in results we can but faintly estimate. For good or for evil these influences are in ceaseless operation, whether we like it or not. We cannot arrest for one single moment the wondrous current. It is for us to determine, by God's help, in what way it shall be best directed; but, Oh, let us never forget the Lord has need of it. It may be employed for his glory and the good of others, or it may be the cause of untold misery. Which shall it be?

Let us then seriously examine ourselves in the light of the great and all-important principle which these words of Christ contain.

The Lord has need of us. Have we acknowledged this claim? We are his by creation; we are his by daily preservation; by we are his by redemption. Have we acted on this truth? His service is perfect freedom. Do we believe this? No man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself; we are the Lord's by right of purchase. Has this truth been matter of personal conviction to each?

Selfishness is the law of the natural heart. Our lips are our own; who is Lord over us? We will not have this man to reign over us. These expressions but too plainly set forth the proud, defiant, attitude of the human heart. The gospel of Christ lays the axe at the root of this tree. Like Dagon, it falls before the ark of God.

Three reflections may suitably close these remarks: --

1. Let us pray earnestly to God for his Holy Spirit to produce in us the deep, heartfelt, conviction of this all-comprehensive truth -- the Lord has need of us for his service; he is pleased to be willing to employ us in his work. Man is slow to recognize this truth. Nothing but divine teaching can enable him to embrace it; we need the regenerating and converting influence of God's Spirit. By nature dead in trespasses and sins, we require the quickening grace of God to awaken us to a sense of a higher

world and the realities of eternity. Hence all through the scripture we are everywhere taught, that a real supernatural influence from on high is needed. "They shall be all taught of God," saith the prophet. "Every man that hath learned and heard of the Father," saith Christ, "cometh unto me." Let us then be very earnest in prayer for the unction from the Holy One, which teacheth and which abideth. We have the precious encouragement of the Redeemer: "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"

2. Let us, under the influence of that Spirit, betake ourselves to the cross of Christ, there in humble faith, to wash our sins away in all-cleansing blood. Faith in that blood is the divinely appointed means for obtaining pardon and peace. The blood of Christ purges our conscience from dead works, to serve the living God. The doctrine of justification by faith only must ever be held fast with holy tenacity. We have nothing to pay, but merely to trust in, depend upon, God's freely offered mercy through Christ. This is the work of God, the one great work--itself inclusive also as the seminal principle of all works -- to believe on him whom he hath sent. It is an affair of the heart as well as, yea perhaps more than, of the head; it is the affectionate, cordial, thankful, acceptance of salvation as a free gift from

God, coming to us through the atoning sacrifice of his dear Son.

3. Let us daily surrender ourselves to God's service. When we rise in the morning, let us feel that the Lord still spares us because he has work for us in his vineyard. There will be need of all our fidelity and temper, our industry and patience, our Christian graces and natural powers, to glorify God, and to go about, like Jesus, doing good amongst our fellow-creatures; and whatsoever our hand findeth to do let us do it with all our might, working while it is called to-day, for the night cometh when no man can work.

And lastly, let us learn to feel the ennobling character of true Christian work. It is the Lord's work. We must be about our Father's business. The work which he hath given us to do, let us do it. And ere long we shall be summoned up higher to wear the victor's crown, and wave the triumphant palm, and join the hosannas of the redeemed in the heavenly Jerusalem, whilst to golden harps we sing the endless song of salvation to our God who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

-- W. F. Taylor, LL.D., M.A.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

## HOW A GREAT KING CAME WITH THOUSANDS, AND WENT BACK ALONE.

IN the later days of the kingdom of Judah there was a good king of the name of Hezekiah, to whom some strange things happened. I will now tell you of them: one was a very wonderful deliverance that God wrought for him, when he and his people were in great danger; another was a very singular deliverance from death. Before Hezekiah's day the kingdom of Judah had fallen very low. His father Ahaz was a very bad man. He did a great many wicked things in the service of idols; he made images of Baal; he offered sacrifices on the hills and in the groves, as if there were no temple in Jerusalem and no living God there; he burnt his children in the fire to the grim god Moloch in the valley of Tophet. When God punished him for his sins, by letting the Syrians and Edomites beat him in war, he only grew worse. The Philistines invaded Judah, and took a number of towns, and Ahaz in his straits sent to the king of Assyria to come and help him; but though he came he gave him no help, but added to his misery. Then he grew worse than ever. He said he would now serve the gods of Syria; he got a great altar made, like one he had seen in Damascus; he shut up the doors of the house of the Lord, and became quite mad in idolatry and sin. So, at the time of his death, Judah was very low, and the people were oppressed by the Assyrians

very heavily. They were reaping the bitter fruits of forsaking God.

When Hezekiah came to the throne, he soon showed that he was going to be a very different king from his father. His first care was to throw open the doors of that had been taken away, bring back the priests, and the passover with great care, and a wonderful throng of people came from all the land to observe it. After that he made a great many wise arrangements for continuing the service of God; and the people did as he bade them, with much zeal. The whole land became quite different from what it had been, and everything the king took in hand prospered.

When he had done these things, he thought himself strong enough to break with the king of Assyria, and not to bear his yoke any more. This made the great king, as he was fond of calling himself, very angry, and he sent an army into Judah, and threatened to lay the country waste, and carry the people away into the east. He had a captain called Rab-shakeh, and him he sent forward to Jerusalem with a proud insulting message, speaking bold and blasphemous things against the God of Israel. Hezekiah had been very much troubled at first, and had tried to make peace by acknowledging a fault, and saying that he would pay as much money as might be asked of him; but that did not in the end satisfy the Assyrian king. So he sent, as I have said, to Jerusalem, and said he wanted to take the

people captive. It was a great thing for Hezekiah, that at this time there was a holy prophet in Jerusalem. His name was Isaiah, and he was one by whom God sent a great many messages to the people. So Hezekiah sent to him, to tell him what bold, bad, words Rab-shekeh had spoken, and to ask him to pray to God to help the people. Isaiah sent back cheering words, and assured the king that God would deliver him. Rab-shakeh then went back to his master, and he, hearing that another great king was coming to fight him, had to pause for a little; but he sent a letter which was even bolder and more blasphemous than the former message. It said to Hezekiah, You are trusting, I suppose, in your God; but the gods of other nations could not save them from my power, and who is Jehovah that he should be able to deliver you? Hezekiah was shocked when he got this letter, and he went in with it to the house of the Lord, and spread it out before God, and prayed to him to save his people out of the hand of this fierce and proud man, who made no difference between dead stocks and the living God. He then received another cheering message by the hand of the prophet Isaiah, and was able to wait in peace for what the Lord would do to save him. The people of Jerusalem soon saw how easily God can deliver from the greatest dangers.

“The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold.”  
That is the way in which one of our poets describes with the



arrival of Sennacherib (such was the king's name) with a great army, before Jerusalem. There were as many soldiers as would fill a hundred and eighty-five halls or churches, holding a thousand each. What a show they must have made, as they marched on! And what a large camp, all round about Jerusalem, they must have needed to hold them! I suppose that the people, looking out from the city, must have seen the hills that close it round all covered with the tents of their proud foes. Perhaps they could not help being frightened and anxious although Isaiah had said that the Lord would defend them. But there was no need for fear. God had said that he would save them, that the Assyrian king would not be able to come into the city, but would soon go back to his own land by the way he came by. As God said by his prophet, it came to pass. For very soon, if not the very first night, after the great host had pitched their camp round Jerusalem, God sent a destroying angel among them, and the whole multitude in the morning were dead men. How the angel killed them I cannot tell, but the dreadful thing was that a hundred and eighty-five thousand persons that went to sleep at night never woke again. The king himself was spared, with, perhaps, some few others, but what must have been his terror and astonishment when he found all his army slain! No wonder that we are told he went away back, I should think as fast as he could, into his own land, where some time after his own sons put him to

death. Hezekiah and the people of Jerusalem, having seen what God could do for them, had nothing to do but to bury their slain enemies, and take their spoil. It was a wonderful deliverance.

After this another very strange thing happened to Hezekiah. He was taken ill, and was very sick, and was like to die. Indeed, the prophet Isaiah said to him that his disease was mortal, and that he should set his house in order, and be ready to leave this world, On hearing this Hezekiah was very distressed; he could not think of dying so soon; and he turned his face to the wall, and prayed to the Lord to spare him. As he prayed he wept very much. Now God is able to heal all diseases, and hearing Hezekiah pray so earnestly, he was pleased to hearken to him, and sent Isaiah with another message. God said to the king, I have heard thy cry, I have seen thy tears; I will make thy life fifteen years longer. Then he gave him a sign that this would be the case. The shadow on the face of the sun dial that was in the court, which Ahaz had made, was to go back ten degrees. So the shadow did return, as you may have seen the hand of a clock put back a number of hours. Then Isaiah told the attendants what to do to make the king better; they were to put a plaster of figs on his boil, and he would recover. He did recover, and lived fifteen years more. There is an account of his feelings when he was sick, and after he was recovered.

But though the good king was thus spared for a number of years, they were not all quite so happy as some before. For he fell into a proud state of mind, and when some ambassadors came from Babylon to him, he showed them all the grandeur of his palace, like one that was vain of his wealth. God sent Isaiah to reprove him, and told him that all the treasures he had shown these strangers would be carried, by and by, to the very city from which they had come, and that his descendants would be captives there. That was very painful to hear; Hezekiah, however, received the message humbly, and said, The word of the Lord is good; I thank him that he gives me peace in my day.

Such were the things that happened to the good Hezekiah. When he died all the land lamented him, and did him honour.

-----

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. In whose reign did the kingdom of Judah, as distinguished from that of Israel, begin?
2. What other king, later than Hezekiah, was famous for repairing the temple, and holding a great passover?
3. When was the passover first appointed?

4. What principle was it that led Moses and the people of Israel to keep it in Egypt?
5. Whom did the passover lamb foreshow?
6. In how many kings' reigns did Isaiah prophesy?
7. Can you find a psalm probably alluding to the destruction of Sennacherib's army?
8. Where have we an account of the sudden overthrow, without a battle, of another great king's army?
9. What king was it, whose disease was not deadly, who yet never left his sickbed?
10. What sign was Isaiah told to give to King Ahaz in proof of the truth of one of his prophecies?
11. In whose reign did the captivity of Judah take place?
12. What psalm contains the lamentations of the Jewish captives?

ANSWERS to the foregoing questions will be found by consulting the following chapters -- 1 Kings xii.; 2 Chron. xxxiv.; Exod. xii.; Heb. xi.; 1 Cor. v.; Isa. i.; Ps. lxxvi.; Exod. xiv. and xv.; 2 Kings viii.; Isa. vii.; 2 Chron. xxxvi; Ps. cxxxvii.

-----

*Prayer.*

O LORD, Thou art governor among the nations. Thou art stronger than the mightiest kings, and all their hosts are nothing before Thy power. We pray Thee to bless and preserve our beloved queen, and to prosper her royal house. May there be given to her many years of life still, and of happy rule over her subjects. We thank Thee, O Lord, that it is long since besieging hosts have been seen round any of the towns in our country. May the feet of invading soldiers be always kept from our shores. May all wars soon cease. May Christ's kingdom come in all the earth. We rejoice in his rule, whose name is the Prince of peace. We ascribe to Him, with thee, O Father, all honour and glory for ever.

*Amen.*

-----

## EVENING WORSHIP.

O GOD the Holy Ghost, who givest the light and life of God the Son unto the hearts of men, visit us, Thy servants, with Thy grace and blessing, and so preserve us under the shadow of Thy wings, that we may never be overcome by the world, the flesh, or the devil; never quench Thy light, refuse Thy holiness, lightly esteem Thy comforts; but may

ever cherish Thy good motions, comply with Thy suggestions, and rejoice in the consolation wherewith Thou ever comfortest them who walk humbly with Thee. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* xviii. 43-49.

HAIL, thou once despised Jesus!  
Hail, derided, injured King!  
Thou didst suffer to release us;  
Thou didst free salvation bring.

Hail, thou agonizing Saviour,  
Bearer of our sin and shame!  
By thy merits we find favour,  
Life is given us through thy name.

Paschal Lamb, by God appointed,  
All our sins on thee were laid:  
For the glorious work anointed,  
Thou hast full atonement made.

All thy people are forgiven,  
Through the virtue of thy blood:  
Open'd is the gate of heaven;

Peace is made 'twixt man and God.

Jesus, hail, enthroned in glory,  
There for ever to abide!  
All the heavenly hosts adore thee,  
Seated at thy Father's side.

There for sinners thou art pleading,  
There thou dost our place prepare;  
Ever for us interceding,  
Till in glory we appear.

ACTS XVII. 22-34.

THEN Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. 23. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, To the Unknown God. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. 24. God, that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; 25. Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing as he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; 26. And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; 27. That they should seek the Lord, if haply

they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us; 28. For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. 29. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. 30. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: 31. Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man who he hath ordained; hereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead. 32. And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter. 33. So Paul departed from among them. 34. Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

#### PSALM CXLVII. 1-12.

PRAISE ye the Lord for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely. 2. The Lord doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts



of Israel. 3. He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds. 4. He telleth the numbers of the stars; he calleth them all by their names. 5. Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite. 6. The Lord lifteth up the meek: he casteth the wicked down to the ground. 7. Sing unto the Lord with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God: 8. Who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains. 9. He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry. 10. He delighteth not in the strength of the horse: he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man. 11. The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy. 12. Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion.

---

*Prayer.*

ONCE again, heavenly Father, at the close of this holy day, do we approach Thy throne of grace to offer up our praises and thanksgivings. Let our prayer be set forth before Thee as the incense, and the lifting up of our hands as the evening sacrifice. We bless Thee for all the privileges and mercies of the Lord's day. We have been permitted to read

and hear Thy holy word, and to join together in pouring out our hearts before Thee. The way of salvation, through the blood of the cross, has been set before us, and we have meditated together on the inexhaustible treasures of a Saviour's love.

And now, O Lord, we ask Thee to bless us ere we retire to rest. Pour out Thy Spirit's most blessed influence on all the services of this day. Write on our hearts the lessons of Thy grace. Help us to treasure them up in our memories and to feed upon the living truth of Thy word. O grant that as new-born babes we may desire the sincere milk of the word, that we may grow thereby. Sanctify us through Thy truth: Thy word is truth. May it be ever dearer to us than thousands of gold and silver; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. May Thy word be hid in our hearts, that we sin not against Thee. And in the hour of trial and temptation, when the enemy cometh in like a flood, may that sword of the Spirit be our sure defence.

Fill us, O Lord, day by day, with the knowledge of Thy will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. Give us grace to lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and to run with patience the race set before us. Keep us ever looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. This one thing may we do; may we forget the things which are behind, and reach forth unto those things which are before; and press toward the mark

for the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Revive Thy work, O Lord, within us, and deepen our experience in the divine life. Make us to be more conformed to the image of Thy Son. May we be crucified with Him; and the life we live evermore in the flesh, may it be a life of constant faith in the Son of God, who loved us and gave Himself for us.

Bless us, O Lord, we beseech Thee, during the week on which we have entered. May the sweet savour of the sabbath shed its sacred perfume over all our employments. May we remember that we are not our own, but Thine, and that thou art pleased to require and accept our feeble services. Help us to consecrate ourselves -- our bodies, souls, and spirits -- to Thee. May our time, our talents, and our opportunities, all be dedicated to Thy glory. Make us to be living epistles of Christ, known and read by all men. Make Thy strength perfect in our weakness, and let Thy grace be sufficient for us. In passing through this thorny wilderness let our shoes be iron and brass and as our days, our strength. May we live in the daily contemplation of Thy love in Christ, and thus, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, may we be changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.

We implore Thy abundant blessing on all the ministrations of Thy word this day. O let not Thy word return to Thee void, but may it be as the rain that

descendeth, and the snow from heaven, watering the earth and causing it to bring forth and bud. May Thy gospel have free course and be glorified. Break down every barrier which obstructs its onward progress. Cast down every high thing that exalts against the knowledge of God. May ignorance and superstition, false doctrine and heresy, ungodliness, cruelty, and sin, flee before the preaching of Thy gospel, and be dispersed as mist and darkness before the rising sun. O let light break forth in every land, and the kingdom of Messiah reign in every heart. Have mercy on Thine ancient people Israel; remove the veil of unbelief, and cause them to recognize Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. Our hearts' desire and prayer to Thee for Israel, is that they may be saved. Lord, hear that prayer, and fulfil Thy purposes of mercy towards them,. And on heathen lands, too, our out Thy blessing and be Thou a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Thy people Israel.

We commend to thy tender compassion this night all who are in distress of mind, body or estate. Sanctify their trials; draw near to them in their sorrows; assure them of Thy love; support them by Thy grace. May they recognize Thy hand in their distress, and feel that Thou dost not willingly afflict nor grieve the children of men. Comfort and relieve them according to their several necessities , giving them patience under their sufferings, and a happy issue out of all their afflictions.

We ask Thy blessing, O Lord, on our land. Regard with Thy gracious favour our Sovereign, and all who are in authority. Endue them with Thy Holy Spirit; enrich them with Thy heavenly grace; prosper them with all happiness; and bring them to Thine everlasting kingdom.

We now commit ourselves, and all who are near and dear to us, to Thy most gracious protection this night, Wash us from all our sins in the precious blood of Emmanuel; accept us in the Beloved; and may Thine everlasting arms of love be round about us, defending us from all evil. And finally , when our earthly sabbaths are ended, may we enter into that glorious rest which remaineth for the people of God, through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, our most blessed Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

*Morning.*

**Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill?**

He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart.

He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.

In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the Lord; he that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.

Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name.

Ps. xv. 1, 2, 3, 4. Ps. ciii. 1.

*Evening.*

**Help, Lord; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men.**

They speak vanity every one with his neighbour: with flattering lips, and with a double heart, do they speak.

The Lord shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things;

Who have said, With our tongue will we prevail; our lips are our own: who is lord over us?

For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him.

Ps. xii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins.**

My defence is of God, which saveth the upright in heart.

God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day.

Behold, he travaileth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood.

His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate.

If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

Ps. vii. 9, 10, 11, 14, 16.      1 Peter. iv. 18.

*Evening.*

**If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.**

But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil-doer, or as a busybody in other men's matters.

Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.

Wherefore, let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

1 Peter iv. 14, 15, 16, 19.

## WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**The Lord is righteous; for I have rebelled against his commandment: hear, I pray you, all people, and behold my sorrow:**

I called for my lovers, but they deceived me; my priests and mine elders gave up the ghost in the city, while they sought their meat to relieve their souls.

Behold, O Lord, for I am in distress; my bowels are troubled; mine heart is turned within me; for I have grievously rebelled.

They have heard that I sigh; there is none to comfort me: all mine enemies have heard of my trouble; they are glad that thou hast done it:

My sighs are many, and my heart is faint.

Lam. i. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22.

*Evening.*

**Is any among you afflicted? let him pray.**



Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass:

And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon-day.

For thou wilt save the afflicted people; but wilt bring down high looks.

For thou wilt light my candle: the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness.

As for God, his way is perfect: the word of the Lord is tried; he is a buckler to all those that trust in him.

James v. 13 Ps. xxxvii. 4, 5, 6. Ps. xvii. 27, 28, 29.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**My soul is weary of my life; I will leave my complaint upon myself; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.**

I will say unto God, Do not condemn me: shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.

Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress? That thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands?

Hast thou eyes of flesh? Or seest thou as man seeth?

Are thy days as the days of man? Are thy years as man's days,

That thou enquirest after mine iniquity, and searchest after my sin?

Job x. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

*Evening.*

**O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires.**

Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted.

But Zion said, the Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me.

Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb: yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget them.

Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.

Isa. liv. 11. Isa. xlix. 13, 14, 15. 16.

**FRIDAY.**

*Morning.*

**Hearken unto me, ye stout-hearted, that are far from righteousness:**

I bring near my righteousness, it shall not be far off,  
and my salvation shall not tarry: and I will place salvation  
in Zion for Israel my glory.

Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of  
Israel; I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit,  
which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go.

Oh that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments!  
Then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness  
as the waves of the sea:

Thy seed also had been as the sand, and the offspring  
of thy bowels like the gravel thereof; his name should not  
have been cut off nor destroyed from before me.

Isa. xlv. 12, 13. Isa. xlviii. 17, 18, 19.

*Evening.*

**Verily, thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of  
Israel, the Saviour.**

O Lord, though our iniquities testify against us, do thou  
it for thy name's sake: for our backslidings are many; we  
have sinned against thee.

O the Hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of  
trouble, why shouldest thou be as a stranger in the land,  
and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a  
night?

Why shouldest thou be as a man astonied, as a mighty man that cannot save? yet thou, O Lord, art in the midst of us, and we are called by thy name; leave us not.

He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

Isa. xlv. 15.      Jer. xiv. 7, 8, 9.      Heb. xii. 5.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**Hear ye, and give ear; be not proud: for the Lord hath spoken.**

Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains, and, while ye look for light, he turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness.

But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride; and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the Lord's flock is carried away captive.

Woe unto thee, Jerusalem! wilt thou not be made clean? when shall it once be?

Jer. xiii. 15, 16, 17, 27.

*Evening.*

**There is no saviour beside me.**

I did know thee in the wilderness, in the land of great drought.

According to their pasture, so were they filled: they have filled, and their heart was exalted; therefore have they forgotten me.

O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help.

I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction; repentance shall be hid from mine eyes.

Hos. xiii. 4, 5, 6, 9, 14.

# HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

## TWENTY-EIGHTH WEEK.

### MORNING WORSHIP.

O LORD, who hast given us cause of perpetual joy by the coming of Thy Son our Saviour among us, we pray Thee, to possess us with a mighty sense of Thy wonderful love; that whereas through the cares of this life we are sorely hindered in running the race that is set before us, we may be careful for nothing, but thankfully commending ourselves in every thing to Thy bountiful grace and mercy, the peace of Thee our God, which passeth all understanding, may keep our hearts and minds, through our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, be blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, world without end. Amen.

HYMN, *or Psalm* civ. 1-6.

MY soul, thy great Creator praise:  
When clothed in his celestial rays,  
He in full majesty appears,  
And, like a robe, his glory wears.

The heavens are for his curtain spread,  
The unfathomed deep He makes his bed;  
Clouds are his chariot when He flies  
On winged storms across the skies.

Angels whom his own breath inspires,  
His ministers, are flaming fires;  
And swift as thought their armies move  
To bear his vengeance or his love.

The swelling billows know their bound,  
And in their channels walk their round;  
He bids the crystal fountains flow,  
And cheer the valleys as they go.

God from his cloudy cistern pours  
On the parched earth enriching showers;  
The grove, the garden and the field,  
A thousand joyful blessings yield.

## PSALM VIII.

O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! Who hast set thy glory above the heavens. 2. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger. 3. When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; 4. What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? 5. For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. 6. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet; 7. All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; 8. The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. 9. O Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!

## PSALM XIX.

THE heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handy-work. 2. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. 3. There is no



speech nor language where their voice is not heard. 4. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun; 5. Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. 6. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof. 7. The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple: 8. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes: 9. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. 10. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and the honey-comb. 11. Moreover, by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward. 12. Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults. 13. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. 14. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer.

## PSALM XXIV.

THE earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein: 2. For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods. 3. Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? and who shall stand in his holy place? 4. He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. 5. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation. 6. This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob. 7. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. 8. Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. 9. Lift up your heads, O ye gates: even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory.

-----  
*Prayer.*

DAY and night, O Lord, are Thine, and they bring with them much to remind us of Thy care and goodness. We bless Thee especially for the sabbath day; for the holy rest which it gave to Thine ancient church; and for the great events of which this first day of the week is commemorative. We rejoice in its light, as it brings to our thought the Great One who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.

May the Holy Spirit dwell with our spirits this day. May His light come upon us, helping us to discern spiritual things. May His living power come into our hearts that we may be convinced of sin; that we may know how to make humble and penitent confession of sin, and that everything Christian within us may be matured and made strong.

We bow before the cross, and pray for pardon through the one offering there presented to take away sin. May the blood there shed speak all to our consciences, that it has been designed to speak to the consciences of Thy people. May the grace which comes to the souls of Thy children through the mediation of Jesus Christ, come largely to us this day.

We commend to Thy favour and blessing all Christian people, all Christian ministers, and all Christian agencies. May it please thee to comfort the mourning, to succour the tempted, to strengthen the weak, to guide the perplexed, to

arrest the careless, to reclaim the wanderer, to save the lost. May the praise and adoration ascending to Thee from the assemblies of Thy people this day find acceptance with Thee; and may the day soon come when from the rising of the sun to his going down Thy praise shall be heard among men, and no praise but Thine. Hear and answer, we beseech Thee, for the Redeemer's sake. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O GOD, who hast brought life and immortality to light by the gospel, and hast begotten us again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, make us steadfast and immovable in this faith, always abounding in the work of the Lord, who died for our sins, and now liveth and reigneth for ever. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* xvi. 7-11.

JESUS lives! no longer now  
Can thy terrors, Death, appal us;  
Jesus lives! by this we know  
Thou, O Grave, canst not enthrall us.  
Alleluia.

Jesus lives! henceforth is death  
But the gate of life immortal;  
This shall calm our trembling breath,  
When we pass its gloomy portal.  
Alleluia.

Jesus lives! for us He died:  
Then, alone to Jesus living,  
Pure in heart may we abide,  
Glory to our Saviour giving.  
Alleluia.

Jesus lives! our hearts know well  
Nought from us his love shall sever:

Life, nor death, nor powers of hell  
Tear us from his keeping ever.

Alleluia.

## REVELATION I. 12-18.

AND I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And, being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; 13. And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt from about the paps with a golden girdle. 14. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; 15. And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. 16. And he had in his right hand seven stars; and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword; and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. 17. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: 18. I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

-----

## SERMON XXVIII.

“SAID I NOT UNTO THEE, THAT, IF THOU WoulDEST BELIEVE, THOU SHOULDEST SEE THE GLORY OF GOD?” -- John xi. 40.

THESE words are part of the narrative relating to the sickness, death, and resurrection of Lazarus. In the verse preceding that above cited, we reach the point where our Lord gave command to those who stood about him to remove the gravestone. Martha, the sister of Lazarus, could expect much from Jesus, but the thought of a restoration of life to the dead had no place in her mind; and anticipating an exposure of the corpse, after it had been for some days in the grave, her sisterly feeling drew back from the anticipated spectacle, and she prayed, in effect, that no such scene should be permitted. Then came the words of our Lord -- “Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?”

I. It is hardly possible to read this scripture with observing *the importance it attaches to the exercise of faith*. Not that such language rarely came from the lips of the Saviour. The fact was far otherwise. His expressions

concerning faith are uniformly of this nature. When the afflicted came to him seeking the exercise of his healing power, the province of faith, ever in such cases, is distinctly marked. “Believe ye that I am able to do this?” “All things are possible to him that believeth.” “O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt” (Matt. ix. 28; ix. 23; xv. 28). This was our Lord’s manner of utterance on such occasions. Those who would be restored to their natural health must believe in his power to impart it.

It was well that it should be so. For this connection between faith and natural healing was to be illustrative of the divinely-established connection between faith and spiritual healing--that healing which was the special object of the Saviour’s mission. Sin is to the soul what disease is to the body; and it was natural that the Redeemer’s exercise of his healing power should be on the same conditions in the one case and in the other. To believe, in some sense, in his divine mission, was exacted from the sick if they would be made whole; and to believe in him as the promised Deliverer was exacted from sinners if they would be saved. We read of places where our Lord could do no miracle because the people believed not: and that great miracle, spiritual enlightenment and spiritual regeneration, never comes where there is not faith. “God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever *believeth* in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John iii. 16).



1. From these facts we are bound to conclude that faith in Jesus Christ must be *a reasonable service*. To know that men are commanded to believe in the Saviour, is to know that such belief must be a duty. We cannot be innocent, in any case, in withholding from God the thing which he demands. But it must be at the same time be remembered, that nothing can be duty which is not in its own nature reasonable. Right and wrong are not determined by authority. That distinction comes from the Divine nature, and from the general constitution of things as proceeding from that nature. In all moral obligations, what God commands is not right because it is commanded -- it is commanded because it is right. Hence, we repeat, to know that God has commanded men to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, is to know that such belief must be dutiful, reasonable.

Men naturally desire to see the reasonableness of duty when it is enjoined upon them. Nor is their solicitude in this respect forbidden. We all see the reasonableness of the divine precepts, more or less, or may see it. But it is not in the condition of creatures that they should see the whole reason of anything, in this world or in any other. Our finite reason is not the measure of the Infinite -- never can be. It is enough if we see sufficient evidence to make obedience a duty, and to make trust for the rest a duty. And such evidence, we are assured, is before us. "This is the

condemnation, that light has come into the world, and men have loved darkness rather than light” (John iii. 19). The light has come. The disposition to follow it has been wanting. “If a man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God” (John vi. 17). The future of men is determined, not by the much or little of their intelligence, but by the much or little of their sound moral feeling, their honesty. “Keep thine *heart* with all diligence: for out of it are the issues of life” (Prov. iv. 23). The evidence which makes faith a duty is large and varied. It is partly historical and external; it is partly ethical and internal. It appeals to the whole nature of man. We do not attempt to deal with it at present. The Scriptures affirm its sufficiency, and the reasonableness of faith as the consequence.

Nor is there anything in the fact that the Scriptures which thus settle this question have come to us from very remote times. Nearly everything that has made us what we are, as civilized men, has come from the past. It is not more true that the boy is father to the man, than that the past is father to the present. Science, learning, art--all the things which have contributed to give enjoyment and embellishment to life -- have become ours mainly by inheritance. Other men have laboured, and we have entered into their labours. We do not begin at the beginning in anything. We adopt results, and we may endeavour to

improve upon them; but in respect to secular matters we are never guilty of the folly of assuming that our predecessors have done nothing, and left everything to be done by us. Why should religion be an exception to this rule? From our general relation to the past, the presumption is strong that our relation to it in regard to religion must be real and momentous. Past ages have done nearly everything for us in relation to other things: have they done nothing for us in relation to this thing? All analogy is against such a conclusion. Nothing, accordingly, is more natural than that the world's oldest book should be eminently its great religious book -- the Bible. We have not been left to turn to our metaphysics, and to begin these with this subject. Men have been busy with it from the beginning, and it has come to us rich with the hoarded experiences of ancient generations. If we are in possession of any measure of religious truth, we have it mainly from history. It is not ours as the fruit of our independent speculation. The Incarnate One, who challenges our faith over bygone centuries, does so reasonably, justly.

2. Further, it is clear from the place assigned to faith in the teaching of the Saviour, that it must be in itself *a highly spiritual act*. The future of men is said to hinge upon it. Our condition, hereafter and for ever, is said to be determined by our having or not having faith. Without it we are condemned already, unpardoned, unenlightened,

unregenerated -- lost. Possessing it, men come to know what the scripture means which says of the Redeemer, that to "as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John i. 12). The world is subdued by faith. The sting of death is taken away by faith. Heaven is realized by faith. Can anything be more irrational or unworthy than to suppose, that the action of the soul of which all this may be said is wholly devoid in itself of either good or evil?

Faith in some things may be of that nature. Faith in Christ cannot so be. Where the conclusions assented to have no moral quality, the assent given to them may be like them, having no such quality. We need no virtue to prepare us for believing that two and two make four, or that the half of a thing must be less than the whole of it. But where the truths to be received are moral and spiritual, they are not even to be apprehended without an intelligence partaking of those qualities, and certainly will not be embraced without sympathies in harmony with them. Now, what is it to believe in Christ? It is to assent to truths of the highest spiritual significance, and to be drawn towards them by feeling in affinity with them. It is to apprehend his doctrine -- his doctrine concerning sin and human depravity: concerning the incarnation, the atonement, the grace of the holy Spirit, and the life to come. But the natural man does not even see the truth which lies in these facts. It is

spiritual truth, and can only be spiritually discerned. Faith knows this truth, appreciates it, confides in it.

Sin is the great impediment to faith. All sin tends in that direction. Hence the admonition, "Cast not your pearls before swine." Hence the assertion, "Men love darkness, because their deeds are evil." The Pharisees could not believe because they were vain. The worldly multitude made light of the gospel because they were worldly. Must not faith, which supposes a superiority, more or less, to all these impediments, be a high spiritual force? To accept the doctrine of Christ concerning sin and guilt, is to be humbled, alarmed, to be ready to cry, What must I do to be saved? To believe in the atonement is to pass from a sense of danger to a sense of security. To believe in the grace of the Holy Spirit, is to feel that human weakness can lean upon the divine strength; and no motive to purity can be so strong as that which is supplied by the hope of a pure immortality. Well might faith be said to be the gift of God. It is not only good, it is the root of all goodness; and every increase of goodness is dependent on its increase. Apart from God it would not be; apart from Him it will not grow.

II. All that we have said concerning the place assigned to faith in the teaching of the Saviour, will be confirmed by the second idea suggested in the passage under consideration, viz.: *The connection which subsists in the scheme of redemption between believing and seeing the glory*

*of God.* “Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?”

By the glory of God we understand his nature. Whatever manifests that nature, manifests his glory; makes it visible to us, or presents it so that we can apprehend it. God is in all his works, but He is in some more than in others. The work in which there is most of Himself, most of his perfections, are the works which reveal most of his glory. The heavens declare his glory. The earth is full of his riches -- is opulent in manifestations of his attributes. But the glory brought near to us by revelation is “the glory that excelleth.” There are traces of the moral perfections of God in nature and providence; but it is in the gospel that this aspect of the divine nature comes before us in its fullest development. In the work of redemption we have the great work of God. It is so as being especially concerned with the most profound mysteries of good and evil.

When our Lord spoke to Martha, reminding her of his having said that, believing, she should see the glory of God, his reference no doubt was to the glory of the divine power as it would be seen in the raising of Lazarus from the dead. But that fact may be taken as illustrating a law. Not only in this instance, but every where, the law of grace is, that to believe is to see the glory of God; and the more vigorous the faith, the more the soul passes on its realization of divine things from glory to glory. It is in this larger measure of its

teaching that we shall consider the passage before us. Faith is the vision power of the soul; and as this becomes strong, the prospect expands, stretches far away, and becomes every where brighter and more beautiful. We shall now glance at a few phases of the Christian life as indicated by this law.

1. A man may become sensible to the action of this law as his mind passes *from a state of doubt in regard to religious truth into a state of certainty*. Truth, said Pilate -- what is truth? Yes, that is a grave question. It has been asked by many who have had to wait long for an answer. We do not here speak of frivolous sceptics, men whose levity betrays their wilfulness in taking the wrong road. Men there are who are not sceptics from choice, but who seem doomed for a while to walk in darkness. No doubt, darkness may be a teacher. To have felt our way in that region, and as it seemed, to little purpose, may not have been lost time. Men who have known what that darkness means, may have learnt how best to minister to the aid of those who are still passing through it, and how best to appreciate the light. To the earnest seeker light is sure to come, though the time through which it sends forth no harbinger may seem long.

Religious doubt has its historical difficulties, its scientific, ethical and theological difficulties. But these may all gradually pass away. Historical evidence may assume

new clearness and force. It may be felt that to assent to it is far more easy, and more natural, than to reject it. So the seeker becomes faithful in little, and to him that hath shall be given. Science, divested of its arrogance, may come by degrees to be perplexing. In the direction of ethics and theology, the inquirer has possibly discovered that there is necessarily very much which the mind of man must not hope to comprehend more than in part. So perhaps it becomes increasingly evident that the only condition of faith possible to man is, that what is known should be such as to warrant trust in the unknown, and that a test of loyalty in this way must be inseparable from the condition of created natures. So the clouds by degrees drift away. What should be left is left. What should be embraced is embraced. Hitherto the universe has been to the soul as sculptural life, beautiful to look upon, and which often seemed about to speak, but it never spoke. With the new oracle it is not so. It speaks, and its words are answers to pressing questions. It does not content itself with proclaiming the doctrine of human depravity. It shows the origin of the disease, and it provides a remedy. In common with nature, the God whom it reveals is the God who has permitted sin. But He is more than that. He saves sinners. He brings good out of evil. Humanity redeemed is not only humanity of repossessed of life, it is made to possess that gift more abundantly. God, as a Redeemer, is not simply the God of nature and



providence. It is God in a far higher manifestation of Himself. As these thoughts possess the soul, its conscious transition from darkness into this marvellous light fills it with gratitude, and as the glad heart turns towards the source whence all this has come, a voice may be heard to say -- "Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?"

2. But there are minds which find their heaviest burden in *a sense of guilt*, and in their solicitude to realize divine forgiveness. With some men conscience slumbers, can hardly be said to live. The habit of resisting all remonstrance from that quarter has become so settled that remonstrance has ceased to be made; or, in the case of others, the passions may not be of an ardent temperment, so that there is no marked tendency towards irregularity or excess to be kept in check, the sole idea of duty being to guard against the charge of perpetrating any social wrong. In the former case conscience has been subdued; in the latter it is inert, because untaught and unawakened.

But minds which have a happy future before them are made to be naturally and spiritually sensitive. It is given to them to see something of the grounds of duty in its higher relations, and something of the wide compass of things which it embraces. To them the commandments of God are exceeding broad. They are seen as taking the soul under their cognizance, with all its deep capabilities of good and

evil; and such persons look back on the life they have lived as placed face to face with these obligations. They see that to an extent not a little alarming, they have failed to be what they might and ought to have been, and to do what they might and ought to have done. Their positive offences, too, are seen to have been manifold; many of them, it may be, of such a nature as to fill them with remorse and apprehension. Seasons as they recur bring up the memory of many a long-past transgression. Many scenes, as they are visited anew, are peopled with sights which the sinner only can see, and give forth voices which the sinner only can hear.

Must it be thus for ever? Must this feeling in relation to good and evil exist only to be a source of dread and torture? No. The thing to be especially feared concerning men is lest they should know nothing of this susceptibility, or knowing something of it, should sin it away. So long as the soul is possessed of this sensibility there is hope. The measure in which this feeling disposes the sinner to covet forgiveness, in which it prompts him to seek it, and to pray for it, is the measure in which a blessed future may be predicted.

But it is possible that even the faith which looks to the cross may have its season of trial. It may be well that the offender should be made to feel, for a while, how evil and bitter a thing it is to have forsaken the Lord his God. But

this discipline from delay will have its limits. The atonement will come to be seen, not as a bribe offered to stay the hand of an avenger, but as a fitting homage done to the majesty of right, and as designed to insure pardon to the guilty, and happiness to the miserable, in consonance with rectitude. Penitence is loyalty. It confesses the justice of law, and the evil of sin. Its solicitude is to escape, not merely from penalty, but from sin; and as the atonement is seen in its relation to the divine love as its origin, and to purity and blessedness as its end, the heart of the penitent learns to confide in it. So often, after a night of darkness and storm, day dawns upon the soul. To gaze upon the cross, then, is to feel the burden which has long oppressed it pass away; and as the relieved heart does its homage to the majesty and goodness of God, and is prepared to express its joy and gratitude in a hymn of wonder and praise, a voice may seem to utter the words, "Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" his glory as able and willing to forgive.

3. But pardon, and a sense of pardon, are not everything. The evidence of spiritual safety in that form, though valuable, is comparatively little, and in many cases the feeling so regarded is not wholly free from the danger of illusion. Evidence as to the *reality of the mind's renovation*, when obtained, is evidence of a more certain and stable description.

Concerning this change it matters little whether it shall have come imperceptibly, beginning it may be with our earliest years, or more suddenly, originating strong moral and spiritual landmarks, separating conspicuously between a former portion of life and a later. Our concern is with the change itself, not with any specialities in its history. Has it come? The influences which have contributed to give it existence may be various, but in itself it is everywhere the same. It consists in fidelity to principle, to right in all things -- in devotion to goodness, in sympathy with spiritual aspirations, and with all things heavenly. But this habit of soul is a growth. It is nowhere perfect. It is everywhere blended with elements of antagonism. Hence the Christian life is described as a warfare. Even good men find a law in their members opposed to the law in their mind; and many find passions in their soul hard to be brought into the obedience of faith.

But seasons come in which Christians can compare past with present, so as to be sensible to a great change -- a change in the direction of larger knowledge; of more rooted principles; of a more thorough incapacity for looking upon this world so as to say it is enough; of a more positive and habitual interest in divine things; and of a wiser candour and charity in judging of other men. The man has striven that he might thus grow, has prayed that divine help might be extended to him to insure such growth. He feels that no

conception of natural causes is sufficient to account for this difference between his present and former self, or between what is, and what many about him, from whom better things might have been expected, continue to be. “Yes,” he might be heard to say, “imperfect as I am, and unworthy as I am, I feel bound to believe that the divine goodness has been my helper, has made me feel that heavenly and not merely earthly acquisition is life and peace. Only influences from heaven could have given my soul these affinities with heaven, these breathings after the godlike.” So the future brightens; so hope and gladness come into the soul, and a voice may be heard to say -- “Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?” the glory not only of his pardoning mercy, but of his renovating grace.

4. In old age *long experience of the divine patience and goodness* deepens this motive to gratitude and this ground of trust. As the voyage of life reaches towards its close, the retrospect is such as age only knows. All the way the eye of the imagination, as it looks back, can rest on signs of disaster and wreck. Some, indeed, have finished their course bravely and happily; but others, and alas! too many, have drifted on the rocks or foundered utterly. The grey-headed man, if he be a thoughtful Christian man, dwells much in that past. His dead men live again. Their history often passes anew before him, and its lessons are

not lost upon him. To feel that he has been safe where so many have perished; that if he has unhappily been disturbed at times in his course, he has been able to regain it, while others have failed to do so; and that with the land whither he would be in sight he has the fair prospect of reaching it -- all this is a matter of memory and of consciousness that might well awaken gratitude and deep feeling. He has a vivid remembrance of his many failures, his many sins, his deep unworthiness; but all that only serves to make the divine long-suffering more wonderful: and as tears drop from the eye, and emotion makes it difficult to speak of all that the heart feels, another speaks, and his words are -- "Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" the glory of that tender love and constancy which pitied thee in thy youth, and will not forsake thee in thine old age.

5. But it is in the *final stage of human experience* that these words may be supposed to be uttered with their deepest significance. We know that the soul will be called to put off "this earthly house," the present body, preparatory to its being clothed anew with its "house from heaven," that is, with another body of a more ethereal order, and better adapted to pure world into which flesh and blood cannot enter. The account of the heavenly state given us in Scripture warrants us in saying, that in that world souls are fully conscious -- conscious of what is within them

and of what is around them. It is a social world. The angels live there in conscious fellowship. Saints live there in such fellowship. The human spirit entering that state must know that it has come to be sinless, and that all around is sinless. Hence there is no more pain, no more sorrow, no more decay, no more death. But we are left to imagine the feeling with which the stranger spirit, led by some friendly hand into that state, comes to be conscious for the first time of the nameless rest and harmony of perfect being; gazes for the first time on all the marvels of that marvellous region; and bows for the first time before the ineffable brightness of the divine throne, and offers there its first spotless homage to the Infinite. There eminently we may suppose that the voice which the happy spirit has heard before may be heard again, and its words be -- "Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" Faith has many visions here, but that its final and great vision. -- ROBERT VAUGHAN, D.D.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

OF A LION WHICH KILLED, BUT DID NOT EAT, HIS PREY.

THERE was another good king of Judah, who, like Hezekiah, proved a great reformer, and held at Jerusalem the grandest passover-feast that had ever been seen from the days of Solomon. He lived still later than Hezekiah; but there was strange thing about him, that long, long, before he was born, he was spoken of by name by a prophet of God, and it was foretold that he would do a special work, which he actually did perform. The way in which this foretelling happened is very curious to tell. I will relate it in the present story.

The first king of the ten tribes, when they rebelled against Solomon's son, and threw off the house of David, was by name Jeroboam. He was an able, though a wicked, prince. Soon after he came to the throne, he began to see that if the people should continue to go up to Jerusalem to worship God, and should meet with their brethren there, it would likely end in their getting reconciled to Judah, and going back to their former allegiance. So he thought he must fall on some plan to prevent their going to Jerusalem



at the feasts. He made, therefore, two golden calves, and he put one of them in Bethel, and the other in Dan, and said to the people, It is far too much toil and trouble for you to go with your sacrifices to the temple on Mount Zion; see, there are the gods that brought your fathers out of Egypt, go and offer before them. That was a cunning but a very sinful plan of his. It is often spoken of in the Bible as a very wicked thing; it was leading a whole people away from the true God. Accordingly, King Jeroboam has often this black mark added to his name, “who made Israel to sin.”

One day the king was standing by the altar which he had built in Bethel, and was going to offer incense before the idol, when a prophet came to the place out of the land of Judah. God had sent him to speak against the sinful worship that had been set up, and he did his duty bravely and faithfully. Although the king was there, he called with a loud voice, speaking to the altar, and saying, O altar, altar, thus saith the Lord; There shall be born in the royal family of David a prince whose name will be Josiah, and he shall come and slay thy priests, and burn on thee the bones of dead men. Then he gave those who heard a sign, and told them that the altar would that day be rent before their eyes, and the ashes on the top of it be poured on the earth. All this was said in the ears of the king, and put him into a rage. So he cried to those that were near to lay hold on the prophet, and in his eagerness he stretched out his own arm

to catch him. But what do you think happened? His arm dried up, and became stiff, and lost all power, so that he could not pull it back, but stood holding it out like a withered branch of a tree. At the same time the altar was rent in pieces, and here was a rush of ashes to the ground. The king was struck with fear, and he said to the prophet, Do pray to the Lord thy God to heal me, and give me again the use of my arm. So the man of God prayed, and the withered hand was restored, just as it had been before. One Would think that surely, after that, the king would give up his idol-worship, and serve the Lord. But that was not the case. He went on in his evil course; he wanted, however, to take the prophet home with him, and give him a reward. But the man of God would not go: for he said the Lord had told him not to stop, or eat bread, or drink water in the place, nor go back by the same road he came by. Accordingly he left to go home, but went by a different way.

Now there happened to be living in Bethel an old prophet, who heard what had been done. His sons had been abroad, and when they came home, they told their father the strange news. It is likely, indeed, that they were on the spot at the time when the altar was rent, and the kings hand was withered and healed again; for they had seen the way the prophet took as he turned to go home, and could tell their father this when he asked them. The old prophet had a design in his mind when he put the question to his sons,

Which way did he go? for as soon as he was told, he said, Get the ass saddled for me, I must go after him. His sons brought the ass saddled, and the old man rode away after the man of God that had come out of Judah. By and by he overtook him, as he sat resting himself under an oak tree. So he said, Are you the prophet from Judah? And when the other said yes, he asked him to turn back and have some refreshment. But the Jewish prophet said, just as he had told the king, that he must not do that, for God had forbidden him to eat or drink in the place. But, in order to prevail with him, the old prophet of Bethel pretended to have a message from God, telling him to go after the other, and bring him back. It was all a lie, and it was very sinful indeed. The man of God from Judah believed him, and went back; he should have remembered God's own certain word to himself, and kept fast by that. He fell before the temptation; but the other was first and, as the tempter, deepest in the sin.

After the two had come back and were sitting at the table together, God was pleased to give to the old prophet a true message, and to make him speak it. So, addressing the man of God from Judah, he said, You have disobeyed God; you have come back, and against his express command given to yourself, you have eaten bread and drunk water in this place, and now God bids me to say to you that you will not be buried in the grave of your fathers. I should think

the prophet from Judah must have heard that with a heavy heart, and perhaps the old prophet was himself startled. Perhaps he did not mean or think of anything so sad as that. Tempters often see consequences arise from their conduct which they did not count on, but that does not lessen their sin.

When the man of God left again to go home, the other gave him the ass to ride on, and he went on his way. But he had not gone far, when a lion met him, and sprung on him, and killed him. His body, falling from the saddle, lay on the road, and the ass stood beside it. But the strange thing was that the lion also stood still, not eating the man's body, nor killing the ass. Some people that were passing saw the two animals standing peaceably side by side, and the corpse of the man lying near. You may be sure they were very much struck with the sight, and would be eager to tell it when they got into the town. When the old prophet heard the news, he got up at once, and rode to the place. He found everything as it had been reported. There was the dead man; and there were the lion and the ass standing together. The lion had not torn the ass, nor eaten the body of the man. God who sent him to slay the disobedient prophet, would not let him do any more hurt, and kept him standing there to show that God had sent him to do what was done. The old prophet went near; and without being touched by the lion, which I suppose would now go away, he took the

dead body, and laid it on the ass, and brought it home, and had it buried in his own grave. Then he said to his sons, When I am dead lay me here beside him, for he was a true prophet, and all he said against the altar will come to pass; put my bones where his are lying. How his words did come to pass, exactly as he spoke them, will be told in the story of the good Josiah.

-----

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Can you find an instance in the Old Testament in which another king was named by a prophet before he was born.
2. What two instances are there, in the New Testament, of children named by angels before their birth?
3. Where is it said in the Gospels that people from the northern parts of Palestine went to the feasts in Jerusalem?
4. Who first made a golden calf for Israel, and said, like Jeroboam, These are thy gods which brought thee from Egypt?
5. Who is it that in the New Testament has a black mark added frequently to his name?
6. Where do we read of a man, in a place of worship, whose arm was withered?

7. Can you find passages where the heavens and the earth are spoken to, as the man of God spoke to the altar in Bethel?

8. Who was it that got the state of his own hand as a sign which he might show to others?

9. Where was it that persons coming to arrest a great prophet were made powerless?

10. What other king entreated a prophet to pray to God to take away calamities?

11. What was the first lie we read of, told by one who wished to lead another into sin?

12. Where else do we read of God sending wild beasts to kill persons that had sinned?

13. Where else do we read of God's power keeping lions from hurting a living person who was near them?

14. To what wicked king did announcement of his doom come while he was feasting?

15. What great prophet was told by God that he would not die where he had wished to end his days, because he had sinned on a great occasion?

ANSWERS to the foregoing questions will be found by consulting the chapters here noted: -- Isa. xlv.; Luke i.; John iv.; Exod. xxxii.; Matt. x. and John xviii.; Matt. xii.; Deut. xxxii. and Isa. i.; Exod. ix. and x.; Gen. iii.; 2 Kings ii.; Dan. vi.; Dan. v.; Deut. xxxii.

-----

*Prayer.*

O LORD our God, when we have Thy word plainly telling us what we ought to do, let us not hearken to the voice of any who would persuade us not to do it. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Let us never tempt others to sin. When we have a hard duty to do, let us trust in Thee for strength, and go forward to do it. O Lord, bless all whose office it is to preach Thy truth. Let them be bold and faithful to tell men of their sins, and to call them back to God. Let them preach Jesus fully, and let their words be with power. When Thou speakest to us by any of them, may we listen and obey. O God, to Thee in Jesus Christ be glory and praise. *Amen.*

-----

EVENING WORSHIP.

O GOD, whose blessed Son was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil, and make us the sons of God and heirs of eternal life, grant us, we beseech Thee, that

having this hope, we may purify ourselves, even as He is pure, that when He shall appear again with power and great glory, we may be made like unto Him in His eternal kingdom, where He ever liveth and reigneth, world without end. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* cxxxix, 7-12.

SAVIOUR, breath an evening blessing  
Ere repose our spirits seal,  
Sin and want we come confessing:  
Thou canst save and Thou canst heal.

Though destruction walk around us,  
Though the arrows past us fly,  
Angel-guards from Thee surround us;  
We are safe for Thou art nigh.

Though the night be dark and dreary,  
Darkness cannot hide from Thee  
Thou art He who, never weary,  
Watchest where thy people be.

Should swift death this night o’ertake us,  
And our couch become our tomb,



May the morn in heaven awake us,  
Clad in light, and deathless bloom.

MATTHEW XXIV. 43-51.

**K**NOW this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. 44. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. 45. Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? 46. Blessed is that servant whom his lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing. 47. Verily I say unto you, that he shall make him ruler over all his goods. 48. But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; 49. And shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; 50. The Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, 51. And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

MATTHEW XXV. 1-29.

THEN shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. 2. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. 3. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: 4. But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. 5. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. 6. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. 7. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. 8. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. 9. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you; but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. 10. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage; and the door was shut. 11. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. 12. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. 13. Watch therefore: for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh. 14. For the kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. 15. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey. 16. Then he that had received

the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents. 17. And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two. 18. But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money. 19. After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. 20. And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained besides them five talents more. 21. His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. 22. He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents besides them. 23. His Lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. 24. Then he which had received the one talent came up and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: 25. And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine. 26. His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: 27. Thou oughtest

therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. 28. Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. 29. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he hath.

-----

*Prayer.*

O LORD, with the close of another day of privilege, we would approach Thee in the language of praise. We thank Thee for our home in this open land; we thank Thee for our open sanctuaries, and our freedom to access to Thee in the service of Thy house. Truly Thou hast prepared for us the green pastures, and hast led us beside the still waters.

Much hast Thou done for us; may we feel our responsibility. Pardon all Thou hast seen amiss in us in the services of this day. Accept, O Lord, our attempts to serve Thee; and may we go forth to the duties of another week invigorated for the discharge of them. Suffer us not to forget our dependence upon Thee. Suffer us not to be tempted above what we may be able to bear. O Lord, suffer us not to wound our own conscience, or to dishonour Thee,

by falling into sin. Prevent us, we beseech thee, in all things by Thy goodness.

May the works of mercy in which Thy churches have been this day engaged be rich in fruitfulness. May the word preached largely profit those who have heard it. May Thy universal church become daily wiser, more holy, and more equal to the work which thou hast given her to do.

Look, O Lord, in much mercy on the darkness of this world, on the sin abounding in it. Save mankind, we implore Thee, from the superstitions to which they are so prone; and from the unbelief and impiety by which they are alienated from Thee, and so often betray their enmity against Thee. All power is Thine, and all the goodness is Thine: hasten, O Lord, the promised reign of goodness, the coming of Thy kingdom. We bow before Thy sovereign will, but, O Lord, how long before we hear the wheels of Thy chariot? All worlds are Thine, all souls are Thine; take to thyself Thy great power, and reign in all hearts. So do we lift up our voice before Thee with Thy whole church, through Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

#### *Morning.*

**Having food and raiment let us be therewith content.**

But they that will be rich fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded.

That they do good, that they be rich in good works.

1 Tim. vi. 8, 9, 10, 17, 18.

#### *Evening.*

**I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot;  
I would thou wert cold or hot.**

Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou

art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:

I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see.

Rev. iii. 15, 17, 18.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee.**

And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's,

But he shall receive an hundred-fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.

But many that are first shall be last; and the last first.

Mark x. 28, 29, 30, 31.

*Evening.*

**But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them.**

But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister:

And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be the servant of all.

For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

Mark x. 42, 43, 44, 45.

## WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:**

And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much good laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry.



But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?

So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

Luke xii. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21.

*Evening.*

**And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.**

And he said unto his disciple, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.

The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment.

Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them. How much more are ye better than the fowls?

Luke xii. 15, 22, 23, 24.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**Now in the morning, as he returned into the city, he hungered.**

And when he saw a fig-tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig-tree withered away.

And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig-tree withered away!

Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig-tree, but also, if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.

And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

Matt. xxi. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22.

*Evening.*

**Men ought always to pray, and not to faint;**

There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man:

And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.

And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Thought I fear not God, nor regard man;

Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

Luke xviii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7.

## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think they shall be heard for their much speaking.**

Be not therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him.

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

Matt. vi. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.

*Evening.*

**And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God.**

Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.

And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.

Mark xi. 22, 24, 25, 26.      Luke xvii. 3, 4.

## **SATURDAY.**

*Morning.*

**Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:**

For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.

Or what man is there of you, whom, if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?

Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?

If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

Matt. vii. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

*Evening.*

**Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.**

If then God so clothe the grass, which is to-day in the field, and to-morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith?

And seek not ye what what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind.

But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Luke xii. 27, 28, 29, 31.

# HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

## TWENTY-NINTH WEEK.

### MORNING WORSHIP.

O LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, teach us as we live in Thee, to live unto Thy glory, and finally to come to thy heavenly kingdom through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*Amen.*

### HYMN, *or Psalm* xxiii.

IF Christ is mine, then all is mine,  
And more than angels know;  
Both present things and things to come,  
And grace and glory too.

If He is mine, let friends forsake,  
And earthly comforts flee;  
He, the Dispenser of all good,  
Is more than these to me.

If He is mine, I'll fearless pass  
Through death's dark dreary vale;  
He'll be my comfort and my stay  
When heart and flesh shall fail.

Let Christ assure me He is mine,  
I nothing want beside;  
My soul shall at the fountain live,  
When all the streams are dried.

#### DEUTERONOMY VI. 1-9.

NOW these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the Lord your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go to possess it; 2. That thou mightest fear the Lord thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged. 3. Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey. Hear, O Israel; the Lord our

God is one Lord: 5. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. 6. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart; 7. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. 8. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. 9. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

#### PSALM CXIX. 33-39.

Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it unto the end. 34. Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart. 35. Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight. 36. Incline my heart unto thy testimonies and not to covetousness. 37. Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way. 38. Stablish thy word unto thy servant, who is devoted to thy fear. 39. Turn away my reproach which I fear: for thy judgments are good.

-----



## *Prayer.*

O LORD, we draw near unto Thy throne of mercy, and adore thee as the one living and true God. The gods of the nations are dumb idols, the work of men's hands; but our God made the heavens. Teach us, Lord, to praise Thee as we ought for the banishment of idolatry by Thy glorious gospel from our shores; and may it be a joy to us to think that as the morning sun ascends the sky, his beams fall not on a single pagan temple or graven image within our beloved land. Blessed God, we thank Thee for this victory of Thy kingdom! O Lord Jesus Christ, who art the light of the world, we glorify Thee in that Thou hast thus scattered the thick darkness in which our fathers once sat, even under the shadow of death. But, Lord, thou knowest how far we are still from being a Christian people. Thou knowest how far we are from exalting, and giving Thee the glory due unto Thy name. Thou knowest how little in our hearts we have obeyed that first and great commandment of the law, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." How prone are we to make other idols than those of wood and stone! How prone are we, while we profess to know God, in works to deny Him; and to worship and serve the creature more than the Creator! Which of us is free from the love of the present evil world? Which of us has learned, as we ought,

the solemn lesson that we cannot serve God and mammon? Which of us has fully cast out of our hearts that covetousness which is idolatry? Lord, we abase ourselves in the dust before Thine infinite majesty; and dark as the sins of the heathen are, we cannot rank them with our own, committed against the clearness of gospel light, and amidst the fulness of gospel privilege! O let our coldness and deadness of heart towards the one great and glorious Jehovah whom we profess to worship be forgiven; and may the blood of Christ cleanse us from this sin!

Grant unto us, O Father, a spirit of earnest opposition to everything in this fallen world which obstructs Thy will or obscures Thy glory. Seeing that we love the Lord, may we hate evil. Since we are redeemed by such a price, may we, through Thy grave, walk at liberty from sin, and seek to free others from its galling bondage. May we be ever found on the side of truth, and in the ranks of holiness. May we contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; and may we support the doctrine, which is after godliness, by a consistent example. May it be our aim as a family and as individuals to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather to reprove them. Teach us to carry the spirit of simplicity and of godly sincerity into every domestic arrangement, and into every personal habit; and may all take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus. Let no act of ours break down the

barrier that divides the holy church of Jesus Christ from the world lying in wickedness; and if we are ever reproached let it only be for righteousness' sake, and because our life condemns the world's sin. Strengthen us to follow the Lord fully, and to press toward the mark for the prize of our high calling in Him. This day may we do something, however little, to fulfil his word, "Ye are the salt of the earth; ye are the light of the world." Hear our prayers for all that are ignorant and out of the way at home, and for the blinded nations that are without God and without hope in distant lands; and as we pray may we live, and be a people formed for Thyself, Lord, to show forth Thy praise! Hear us, O merciful God, through Jesus Christ our Saviour; and bring us in the end to thy heavenly kingdom, where our warfare with sin and evil shall be accomplished, and our labours crowned with everlasting rest. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O LORD, the God of the dead and of the living, strengthen our faith in that unseen world over which Christ died to have the dominion, and gather us with all thy saints in the day of His appearing, who liveth and reigneth with thee, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* cxvi. 1-8.

AWAKE, my soul, in joyful lays,  
To sing thy great Redeemer's praise!  
He justly claims a song from me;  
His loving-kindness, O how free!

He saw me ruin'd in the Fall,  
Yet lov'd me, notwithstanding all;  
He sav'd me from my lost estate;  
His loving-kindness, O how great!

Through num'rous hosts of mighty foes,  
Though earth and hell my way oppose,  
He safely leads my soul along;  
His loving-kindness, O how strong!

When trouble, like a gloomy cloud,  
Has gather'd thick, and thunder'd loud,  
He near my soul has always stood;  
His loving-kindness, O how good!

Soon shall I pass the gloomy vale;  
Soon all my mortal powers must fail;  
O may my last expiring breath  
His loving-kindness sing in death!

Then let me mount and soar away,  
To the bright world of endless day;  
And sing with rapture and surprise  
His loving-kindness in the skies.

JOHN XI. 1-15, 38-45.

NOW a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. 2. (It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.) 3. Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick. 4. When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby. 5. Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. 6. When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was. 7. Then after that saith he to his disciples, Let us go into Judea again. 8. His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again? 9. Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. 10. But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him. 11. These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. 12. Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. 13. Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. 14.

Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. 15. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless, let us go unto him. 38. Jesus therefore again groaning in himself, cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. 39. Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days. 40. Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, that thou shouldest see the glory of God? 41. Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. 42. And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. 43. And when he thus had spoken he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. 44. And he that was dead came forth, &c.

-----

## SERMON XXIX.

“THEN SAID JESUS UNTO THEM PLAINLY, LAZARUS IS DEAD. AND I AM GLAD FOR YOUR SAKES THAT I WAS NOT THERE, TO THE INTENT YE MAY BELIEVE; NEVERTHELESS, LET US GO UNTO HIM.” -- John xi. 14, 15.

THIS wonderful narrative contains inexhaustible material of consolation to the people of God amidst the deepest sorrows of bereavement, and is fitted to lead the minds of those who are not yet Christians, by a pleasing attraction, to him who is the Resurrection and the Life, the only guide of dying man through the dark valley that is before us all, so that brighter world where sin shall be unknown, and death shall be swallowed up in victory. No one can read over these beautiful words, from first to last, without feeling that there is them a depth and fulness, of which all the sorrowing hearts on earth, even in their deepest grief, cannot reach the bottom. The subject of death needs constantly to be kept in view, as there is nothing better fitted to moderate the joys and disarm the temptations of this present life; and as the subject has at the same time its sadness, our minds ought to be directed to these words of our Lord, uttered to the disciples on occasion of the decease of his friend Lazarus, which may well be applied to the

circumstances of all true Christians, when death either enters their households or lays it hand upon their own persons: -- “Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him.”

In this text are three topics to which, in succession, our minds need to be turned: I., the Saviour’s *absence* from his people’s death; II. the Saviour’s *gladness at that absence*; and III., the Saviour’s *return*.

I. Let us consider the Saviour’s absence from his people’s death: and here it may be remarked, first, that his absence is *not accidental*; and secondly, that it is not *total*.

1. First then, Christ’s absence from his people’s death is *not accidental*. Just as he withdrew purposely from the neighbourhood of Bethany, and refused to revisit it so long as the disease of Lazarus was running its course; so does he withdraw, so far as the manifestation of his omnipotence or miraculous help is concerned, from every human deathbed, even from that of those whose souls are most precious in his sight. He could interpose, if he pleased, in answer to prayer. He could arrest the burning fever. He could check the rapid consumption. He could restore light to the sunken eye, and strength to the nerveless frame, and could prolong all those joys of brotherhood and sisterhood, of parental, filial, and conjugal love, which death so rudely and cruelly interrupts on earth for ever. But he will not thus interfere.



He will not reverse, even in the case of his own people, the great law, “Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return!” He waits patiently the progress of distempers and maladies till they have reached a fatal issue, unmoved by the prayers of relatives and the sighs and tears of the sufferers themselves, till there be occasion to utter the sad words “Our friend Lazarus sleepeth,” or to remove all veil of obscurity and declare plainly, “Lazarus is dead.” Thus has it been with others; thus shall it be also with ourselves. From many a disease we may have been raised up, from many a death delivered; but at length the summons shall be given -- Arise and depart! At length the hopes of those who watch over us, like those of the sisters of Lazarus, shall sink in despair, and that great and solemn fact shall take place in our history which is expressed in these few and simple but impressive and awful words, “he is dead.” There are many other considerations which are fitted to support and nerve us most consolatory: that Christ in apparently deserting us knows what he is doing; that it is not forgetfulness or coldness, but well-considered and premeditated love; and that if he be not present to rescue, it is because he has provided some better thing to be unfolded in the future.

2. But, secondly, Christ’s absence is *not total*. Though absent from Lazarus in body, he was present in spirit. He knew all the turns of his sickness, and the exact moment of his death. He doubtless was present to the eye of Lazarus’

faith in his last moments, and when the sisters of the dying man were lamenting that he was so far away, the dying man himself enjoyed a nearer sense of his fellowship and love than he had ever done before. Thus it is still in the experience of Christ's people. Though Christ is not present to rescue from the grave, he is present to watch the languor and sufferings of the body, and the disquietudes and troubles of the mind. He is present to administer strong consolation and good hope through grace. He is present to repel the temptations and machinations of the great adversary. He is present to sustain the last trembling steps in the deepest darkness of the valley, and to catch up the falling spirit into his own everlasting arms. Christ's absence then, though in one sense very important and material, is yet a limited and a mitigated absence. He is absent like the sun when it still leaves a twilight, or shines by the reflection of the moon; and though his absence suffers flesh and heart to fail, his presence is still the strength of the heart, and the soul's portion for ever!

II. Having thus spoken of the Saviour's absence from his people in death, we now proceed, in the second place, to explain his *gladness at his own absence*. At first hearing the words look strange and paradoxical -- "I am glad for your sakes that I was not there;" and yet the further comment explains them, "to the intent ye may believe." In other words, Christ was glad that Lazarus died, inasmuch as the

sequel of that death strengthened the disciples' faith, when they saw him raised from the dead. Christ was glad even at the decay and extinction of the animal life of his friend Lazarus, since that was to be the occasion of the quickening of spiritual life in his other friends and disciples; and we thus lay hold of a general principle which will explain why Christ permits his people not less than others to descend into death; the principle, viz., that in this way the faith of other disciples is invigorated and strengthened. Of course, it cannot be by the resurrection of the saints at the last day that faith is produced, for the season of faith is then past and gone. But there are circumstances connected with the death of Christ's people, circumstances which happen in the present life, which as much tend to produce or strengthen faith as the resurrection of Lazarus in this life did; and to these circumstances we may only apply the Saviour's words, "I am glad that I was not there," as furnishing an explanation and justification of equal gladness on his part at the present day. Some of these circumstances I shall now mention.

1. And first I observe, that Christ is glad *because of dying testimony born to the truth of the gospel*. All testimony depends for its worth on the character of the person uttering it, or on the circumstances in which it is uttered. Now in both respects the dying testimony of Christians is exceedingly honourable to Christ. Those who

thus testify to the Saviour are persons whose word would be taken, on other subjects, by all impartial hearers. It may be safely affirmed that no class of men are more credible than Christians, in regard to all things of which they have experience. And now in the article of death they are put, as it were, in the most impressive of all situations, and deliver their testimony from a lofty elevation above the world.

What motive can a dying man have to deceive? The world is fading and expiring. He is about to appear in the presence of his judge. He cannot wish to meet him with a lie in his right hand; and, therefore, when a dying man bears witness to the grace of the Saviour, to the preciousness of his name, to the truth and efficacy of his gospel, there is in all this a power in the highest degree fitted to make men believe, so that one deathbed may become the seed of many conversions. But if Christ did not leave his people to die, all this testimony would be lost, all this precious influence would be unemployed, so that in this respect Christ may well be glad to let death take its course. Many books have been written to prove the truth and divinity of the Christian religion, and to reply to unbelievers and sceptics; but we are persuaded that the testimonies of dying Christians have done more to recommend the gospel than this whole body of literature; and that if the question were whether we shall keep the books and lose the deathbeds, or lose the books and keep the deathbeds, there

is no intelligent Christian who would not at once decide that the deathbeds should be retained -- the books of evidences surrendered. Yea, we will go further, and say that if the enemies of Christ had their choice, they would decide the question on the same principle. They would say, "we can answer books, we can rebut arguments, we can put our own construction on the other facts that seem to support the gospel as the truth of God; but these deathbed testimonies ring in our ears and disturb our consciences; let us have no more of them, and let Christians die in silence."

2. Secondly, Christ is glad *because of dying illustrations of the power of the gospel*. On a Christian deathbed no word may be spoken, and yet a most powerful illustration may be furnished of the spirit of the gospel of Christ. Many are timid and diffident; their tongue is not loosed to speak loudly for Christ; but all their other members and organs speak for him. There is a meek submission, an unfailing patience, a victorious cheerfulness, under lengthened and depressing suffering; there is an inward peace, a quiet hope, a touching tenderness of conscience towards God and humbling of the soul under his hand; there is a fondness for the Bible, a love of serious conversation addressed by ministers or relatives, a pleasure in prayer and supplication, which evidently tell how the heart is exercised; and when this continues and even increases, through lengthened seasons of illness and in the

face of approaching death, is there any one who will say that all this is not a most powerful illustration of the gospel of Christ, and one which recommends it alike to the unbelieving and to believers in the most effectual manner? There is nothing under the sun that more speaks the reality of Christ's gospel! Is it possible that men and women, and even children, in their dying moments, can be clinging to a delusion? Is it possible that the fruit of lies should be such calmness, holiness, love, devotion, heavenly hope? Is it possible that any natural workings of the mind could thus rise above nature, and exhibit in death the very stamp and seal of immortality? If any can believe this, we do not envy them their reason or their sensibilities; and indeed this is not believed by those who see the spectacle. They confess the hand of God, give glory to the God of heaven, and involuntarily exclaim, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like theirs!" Over all this, then, Christ rejoices, as covering his gospel with such honour.

3. Thirdly, Christ is glad *because of dying opportunities to make impressions in his favour*. We do not refer at all in this to the testimony borne by the dying, or the manifestation of the power of the gospel in the victory over death. We refer to the state of mind into which sickness and death throws relatives, connections, and survivors. The graces of the one party are exalted, and at

the same time the susceptibilities of the other for receiving good impressions from them are deepened. Affliction, trouble, and death soften the hard heart of the unconverted, and melt again the freezing heart of the backslider; and thus much good may be done that at any other season would be impossible. Appeal may be made to the experience of Christians, if they have not felt all their spiritual sensibilities stirred up and subjected to a wholesome process of excitement at such times -- a process which resulted in the strengthening and increase of their faith. O, how little does the world seem when we are called to stand beside the sickbed or deathbed of a beloved relative! The very things that interested us most -- that perhaps absorbed our anxieties in connection with this present life -- vanish into nothingness. We are ashamed of our own engrossment with them, and made to feel that in comparison of heaven and eternity, and in so far as they do not bear on heaven and eternity, they are lighter than vanity! What salutary impressions have not been made on multitudes by such scenes and such lessons! Have they been made on us? We live among sickbeds and deathbeds; and our course must be different from most if we have not stood by the sickbeds and deathbeds of the people of God. Did we not feel then that one thing was needful; that Christ was all and in all; and that the utmost we could live and labour for was, at last to lay our head in peace upon a dying pillow, and say, "I know

whom I have believed?” And shall Christ lose this opportunity of moral and spiritual impression, and not rather suffer sickness and death to have their way, as if he were not by, to the intent that men may believe?

III. We now proceed, in the third place, briefly to speak of Christ's *return*. “Nevertheless,” says the Saviour, “let us go unto him.” The Saviour did not leave Lazarus to lie in the grave. He returned to comfort his weeping sisters, to make good his love to his friend, and to manifest forth his own glory by raising him from the dead. Then those that sowed in tears reaped in joy; and the crowning miracle of love and goodness rounded off this sublime history. And so there is in store for all Christ's people a return of their Lord from his long absence -- a return to undo the work of death and to spoil the spoiler. He shall not come alone, as he did not come alone to the tomb of Lazarus. The Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God. The spirits of the blessed shall be mingled with the angels of light in that august company. Never did earth witness so vast and stupendous a work. He will stand upon the dust of a world that has rolled for ages, and has become thickly blended with the ashes of innumerable generations of his people. Not the earth only, but the sea, shall deliver up its dead. The monuments of marble shall hear his voice, the rude mounds of clay, the mausoleums of princes, the resting-places of the



poor, the graves a span long, the commingled dust of fathers and children in the peaceful churchyard, of friends and foes in the trenches of the battlefield -- all the hidden and gloomy chambers of this vast sepulchre of a world: and wheresoever a Christian has been laid, there shall Christ's eye seek him out, there shall Christ's hand draw forth his buried dust, which is precious in his sight; and amid the blasts of the trumpet and acclamations of angels, this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality! Happy the man that can anticipate these scenes for himself and his departed ones without fear! Happy the man that now lies low in the dust of penitence, that he may be prepared to rise hereafter out of the dust of death, and to whom Christ's return shall be the signal of the resurrection of life!

In drawing to a close, there are one or two practical inferences which may be drawn from this subject: -- *How different are the views taken by sense and by faith!* The disciples judged by sense of our Lord's behaviour in regard to Lazarus. So did his sisters, Mary and Martha. They saw in disease and death pure unmingled evils, with nothing to rejoice over, either in them or in Christ's connection with them. Christ, on the other hand, saw the whole subject in light of faith, and he discovered joy where they only saw weeping, and lamentation, and woe. Thus it always is -- things are not what they seem. If we judge according to the

appearance, we shall never judge righteous judgment. We shall grieve when we should rejoice, and rejoice when we should grieve; and God's great plan, so soothing and comfortable, will always be in clouds and darkness unto us! O, then, for the faith which sees with Christ's eyes and feels with Christ's sensibilities! Then death shall already be overcome, and songs of gladness shall rise through all its dark dominion!

Again, *All Christ's dealings tend to produce and strengthen faith.* This is the golden result of all God's dispensations, of all Christ's revelations, of all the Spirit's operations -- "To the intent ye may believe." Whether we are smitten or caressed, whether we are lifted up or cast down, whether disease stand afar off at God's bidding or invade our hearths and homes, this is the final cause -- "To the intent ye may believe." What is the design of the whole of Providence? "That the trial of your faith might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory." What is the substance of all prayer? "Lord, increase our faith." Here, then, learn to prize affliction and bereavement, which teach us to walk by faith, and not by sight; and if our faith only grow, give God thanks, and count these all joy!

*Lastly, Christ returns in peace only to his friends. The resurrection is universal, but the ultimate gladness is not.* For those who die unreconciled to Christ the doom of rising again is unutterably dreadful. The risen body may then say

to the re-appearing spirit, “Hast thou found me, O mine enemy!” and as they have been partners in sin, they shall be in punishment. It is not yet too late to escape this curse, which, fall on whom it may, will make it good for that man that he had never been born. Christ offers us his friendship, and offers it cordially and earnestly. We may yet be as happy as Lazarus; as honoured as Mary and Martha, and the disciples. The grave may yet close over us in hope; and the day of Christ’s return may be to us the birth-day of immortality and the harbinger of paradise.

-- JOHN CAIRNS, D.D.

-----

## THE CHILDREN’S SERVICE.

OF THE KING OF JUDAH WHOSE NAME WAS FORETOLD LONG  
BEFORE HIS BIRTH.

THE prophet that went to Bethel, and prophesied against the altar there, said that a son would be born in the house of David, whose name would be Josiah, and that he would come and destroy it quite. It was a long time before this word of God came to pass. But God’s words are not forgotten by himself, though men may think them so. They are sure to be made good in the right time; because there is

no counsel, nor might, nor understanding against the Lord. So at last the child Josiah was born, and he lived to do all that the prophet said he would do. The story of his life is very interesting.

He was the great-grandson of good Hezekiah. He came to the throne when he was a mere child. He was just eight years old when he was made king. The scripture says of him (and it is a great thing to have said) that he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord. He strove to act in a way to please God, like his great forefather David. When he was only fifteen or sixteen years of age he showed to the whole nation that he was resolved to serve the Lord God of Israel -- I suppose by some public acts of profession and service, something like what young people who love Jesus perform now when they go to the Lord's table, and do what he has bid us do in remembrance of him. Four years later, when he was a mere youth of twenty, he began to be a zealous reformer. He found images of idols all through Jerusalem and the country of Judah, and bad practices prevailing in connection with their worship; and he set himself to put an end to them. He did his work in a very determined way. There were altars to Baal, and he threw them down, as men pull down an old house; there were images on the top of the altars, which he cut in pieces; there were groves, and he cleared them all away; then he took the idols, both carved and molten, and beat them to dust, and

carried the dust to places where those that served the idols had been buried, and strewed it on top of their graves. I suppose he said, Let dead gods go to dead men that trusted them. He took the bones of the priests of the idol-gods, and burned them on the altars, before he threw them down. He would say, Let their names perish with their bad works. It was a stern, rough duty he had to do, like all great reformers, like Luther, like John Knox, but he did it with a strong will. The strangest thing was this, that though he was only king of Judah, he went all through the land of the other tribes, throwing down altars everywhere, and stamping idols to powder. No one withstood him. So is it with determined men, with right on their side. So is it with those whom God raises and helps. One wonders how the people that did not own him as king allowed him. But by this time they had no king of their own; the last person who reigned over the ten tribes had been carried captive into Assyria, and a mixed race were staying in the lots of Ephraim, and Manasseh, and Simeon, and Naphtali. Many, however, of the people of Israel were among them, and when they saw the zeal of the Jewish king, they thought of the days of Hezekiah, who had done like things, and perhaps of the times when David and Solomon reigned over the whole land, and made it glorious in the eyes of all the nations round about.

It was during his journeys through the land of the ten tribes that Josiah came to Bethel, and cast down the altar that Jeroboam had built. When he had done so, and stamped the idols to powder, he turned round and looked at the graves that were near, and took the bones out of them, and burnt them on the ruins he had made. But there was one grave he would not disturb. It was the sepulchre of the prophet that had foretold this very thing that Josiah was doing. There was a title on it, telling who he was. So Josiah said, let him alone, let no man move his bones; and they let them alone. Even in this the memory of the just man was blessed.

After this a very touching and beautiful thing happened. In those days there was not a Bible in every house, or in every one's hand, as there may be now. There was no printing press to make copies without number, so that every body for a very little sum indeed might have one. You can have a New Testament now for twopence, and a whole Bible for sixpence. I should not wonder to see ere long penny Bibles. Would it not be fine to sow them over the earth, as a sower sows his seed in the field? But in the days of old they had to make copies of the Scriptures by writing them slowly out with the hand; and when people did not care for serving God, nobody took the trouble of copying the book which told how to serve him. So it happened that in Josiah's early days there was not a Bible known to be in

the land. What he had done was from the remembrance of old people, or the teachings of prophets. But after casting down the altars of the idols that had cursed the land, Josiah gave orders to repair the temple, and the people everywhere gave money very readily for the work. So, setting about the task, and removing rubbish, and looking into every corner, they found an old roll, which the high priests of that day bade them take to the king. The king asked some one to read it, and it turned out to be a copy of the law of Moses, as God gave it to him; and when the king heard, he was deeply distressed. He saw that for long, long years, the people of Judah had been leaving quite undone what God had commanded. In those times, when persons were exceedingly sorry about anything, they were in the habit of tearing their upper robe, and the king in his grief rent his clothes, and cried. He then sent for the high priest and others, and said, God must be very angry with us all, for we have not kept his laws at all. Go and ask the prophetess what we should now do. The priests and others went as the king commanded and when they came to the prophetess -- her name was Huldah -- she gave them an answer which was both sad and pleasing. It was sad, for it said that God was so angry that he would not allow the people to be much longer unpunished, but would send them away into another land for their sins, and they would be taken from their homes and the graves of their fathers. It was at the same

time pleasing, for it said that as for Josiah, because his heart had been tender, and he had wept before God when he heard the words of the law, there would no evil come upon Jerusalem in his day. A grand day followed. The king got a great assembly together and he made the law be read to them, and he stood in his place and spoke to them, and persuaded them to agree to make a promise to keep the law of the Lord, as they had heard it, and to stand to it. So far did his kingly influence and his pious example prevail with them, that while he lived they did stand to it; but he died while he was yet quite a young man, and then the people went back again into sin, because, having no root in themselves, their religious principles had been unsettled, and the wrath of God came upon them.

After the book of the law of God was found, the king resolved to keep the passover in the way which God had ordered it to be kept. Great preparations were made, and everything was done to make the service such as might be pleasing to God and useful to the people. The priests did their duty. The singers were in their places. The passover lambs were killed and roasted according to the law. A great many other sacrifices were offered. The feast was kept for seven days. It is said that there had not been a passover like it, so regular, so hearty, so grand, from the days of Samuel the prophet. Josiah was not more than twenty-six years old when this passover was kept.



It is sad to think that one so earnest and so good died at last because he was bent on doing something he had no call to do. But God was angry with his people, and he meant to take away their good king, that he might prepare the way for sending them into captivity. So he left him to himself in the matter in which he did foolishly. It was this: the king of Egypt had a quarrel with the king of Assyria, and went up with an army to fight against him in his own land. This made it necessary for him to go through Palestine or near it, and Josiah thought he must go out and stop him. The king of Egypt did not want to fight with Josiah, and sent him word to say that he had no quarrel with him, and did not wish to hurt him. But Josiah would fight, and in the battle, when the archers were shooting their arrows, one of them pierced him, and the wound was fatal. He lived to be brought back to Jerusalem, but died soon after. It was a sorrowful day for Judah when King Josiah died. There was great lamentation made over him. Well might Jerusalem and Judah be grieved. He was their last good king. Jeremiah the prophet grieved sore for him, for he knew that now he would have no friend in high places, and that soon the people would be carried away captive. The place where the battle that caused Josiah's death was fought was the valley of Megiddo, and so great was the defeat and the sorrow caused by the king's death, that after that, any great mourning among the Jews was

spoken of as being like the mourning in Megiddo. Happy Josiah, however, taken away, as the Bible says of the righteous, from the evil to come!

-----

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Can you find a text where the reason is given why God sometimes seems slow to keep his word?
2. Can you find two texts, on predicting, another recording, the most wondrous of births, far asunder?
3. What were the names of Josiah's father and grandfather?
4. Who, before Josiah's day, was very zealous against Baal, and slew many of his priests?
5. What name is given to the Bible in the Bible itself, showing that it was only then in a written form?
6. When was money cast into a chest for repairing and cleaning the temple, and faithfully spent for that purpose?
7. Whose great liberality does the apostle Paul commend?
8. Who was it that rent his clothes in grief for the loss of property and children in one day?
9. What was the name of a prophetess that saw Jesus in the temple?

10. Can you find a place where it is said that the law was publicly read to a congregation in the open air with little children among them?

11. What was the most remarkable passover ever kept?

12. Do you know a passage comparing sorrow for crucifying Christ to the grief in Megiddo?

ANSWERS to the preceding questions may be found by consulting the following chapters: 2 Pet. iii.; Isa. ix. and Luke ii.; 2 Chron. xxxiii; 1 Kings xii.; 2 Cor. viii.; Job i.; Luke ii.; Neh. viii.; Luke xxii.; Zech. xii.

---

*Prayer.*

O LORD God, grant that while we are yet children, we may give proof that we are seeking Thee in Jesus Christ. Prepare us for the work thou shalt give us to do. If we are called to suffer rather than to work, prepare us for that. Keep us from self-will, and going against warnings. Raise up reformers and zealous men in our times. Make the young princes of our queen's grandchildren godly children, like Josiah, and bless this land with a continuance of good sovereigns, for Jesus' sake. *Amen.*

---

## EVENING WORSHIP.

O LORD of Hosts, Quickener of the dead and Saviour of the living, visit us in this mortal life below with Thy heavenly grace, that we may seek for glory, honour, and immortality, and in the day when the Bridegroom cometh, may go forth with all his ransomed ones to meet the Lord in the air, and so be for ever with the Lord. *Amen.*

## HYMN, or *Psalm lxxiii.* 23-26.

SAY, why should friendship grieve for those  
Who safe arrive on Canaan's shore?  
Releas'd from all their hurtful foes,  
They are not lost, but gone before.

How many painful days on earth,  
Their fainting spirits number'd o'er!  
Now they enjoy a heav'nly birth;  
They are not lost, but gone before.

Dear is the spot where Christians sleep,  
And sweet the strains their spirits pour;  
O, why should we in anguish weep?  
They are not lost, but gone before.

Secure from ev'ry mortal care,  
By sin and sorrow vex'd no more;  
Eternal happiness they share,  
Who are not lost, but gone before.

To Zion's peaceful courts above,  
In faith triumphant may we soar,  
Embracing in the arms of love  
The friends not lost, but gone before.

To Jordan's bank, when'er we come,  
And hear the swelling waters roar,  
Jesus! Convey us safely home,  
To friends not lost, but gone before.

## JOHN XV. 1-10.

I AM the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. 2. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. 3. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. 4. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. 5. I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing. 6. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. 7. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. 8. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. 9. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. 10. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

-----

## *PRAYER.*

AGAIN, O thou God of our life, and author of our salvation, we kneel at thy footstool. Through the trials and temptations of another day Thou has carried us, and though we dare not say that we have been pure from sin, we bless Thee if Thy grace has restrained us from open transgression, and hindered our example from being a stumbling-block to any of thy people. Alas, O Lord, how sorely does iniquity prevail against us, and what reason have we to confess with Thine apostle, “When I would do good, evil is present with me!” Enter not, O Lord, into judgment with us. Though we desire to come out and be separate from evil, we lament that it stains and defiles our best hours and days; and our only hope is, that “the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.”

We mourn, O Lord, the resistance which we see all around us to the purifying and sanctifying influence of the gospel of Christ. We would not judge or condemn our fellow-men, as if we could read their hearts, or pronounce upon their state towards Thee. We would ever remember that he that judgeth is the Lord; and our own falls and inconsistencies would enforce this lesson of Christian charity. But, Lord, we grieve over the coldness of heart in thy professing people, which we so sadly share; and we

think with deep sorrow of the many who walk as the enemies of the cross of Christ. O how little is Thy fear before the eyes of the children of men, and how little has the grace of God which bringeth salvation taught them to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, and righteously and godly in this present world! How many halt between two opinions! How many sow to the flesh, and of the flesh reap corruption! Arise, O Lord, and plead thine own cause. Sweep over our land with a blessed revival of pure and undefiled religion. Slay the enmity of men's hearts by the cross of Christ. Bring sinners under the power of the world to come. Cleanse the guilty conscience with the blood of sprinkling, and let multitudes be washed and sanctified and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. Let the gospel be preached with all fidelity and earnestness, and let it prove a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Let it rouse up them that are at ease in Zion. and may they flee to the stronghold as prisoners of hope! Bless every home mission enterprize, and may the neglected myriads of our population, for whose souls no man has cared, be at last rejoiced over as dead, but now alive again, as lost, but now found. "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain that they may live!" We would also, O merciful Father, plead for the millions of the heathen in distant lands, for the disciples of the False Prophet, and for Thine ancient people sunk in the



unbelief and degeneracy of ages. O Thou God of salvation, regard them all with the yearnings of divine compassion, and send forth Thy quickening Spirit, that they may live. Raise up missionaries to warn and teach every tribe and tongue, and to bring all to the obedience of the faith. Destroy the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. Let the feet of them that publish peace be beautiful upon all the mountains of a degraded and darkened world. O, Almighty Saviour, claim thine own inheritance, and redeem Thy blood-bought possession from the hand of the spoiler! Hasten Thy blessed work, and cut it short in righteousness; and let the millennial glory at length gladden our longing eyes. Let it be our heaven upon earth to prepare for Thy kingdom; and may the souls of others, far and near, be given us for our everlasting joy and crown when the Saviour comes in his final glory. Then may it be seen that we have not run or laboured in vain; and when we rest from our labours, may our works follow us! *Amen.*

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

#### *Morning.*

**I am the Lord that doth sanctify you.**

Abstain from all appearance of evil.

And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.

For this is the will of God, even our sanctification.

And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me;

Exod. xxxi. 13.    1 Thess. v. 22, 23, 24.    1 Thess. iv. 3.    Jer. xxxiii. 8.

#### *Evening.*

**Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.**

As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me, through their word;

That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one is us that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

John xvii 17, 18, 19, 20, 21.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.**

And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.

Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God,

That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God.

Rom. xv. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17.

*Evening.*

**For if the ministration of condemnation be glory,  
much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed  
in glory.**

But their minds were blinded: for until this day  
remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the  
old testament; which vail is done away in Christ.

But even unto this day, when Moss is read, the vail is  
upon their heart.

Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail  
shall be taken away.

Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the  
Lord is, there is liberty.

But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the  
glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from  
glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

2 Cor. iii. 9, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18.

## WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**To them that are sanctified by God the Father, and  
preserved in Jesus Christ, and called:**

Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied.

But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you,  
brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the

beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth:

Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you.

Jude 1, 2.    2 Thess. ii. 13, 14.    2 Thess. iii. 4.

*Evening.*

**For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,**

Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.

And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me.

And he answered them, saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren?

And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!

For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.

Heb. ii, 11, 12, 13.    Mark iii. 33, 34, 35.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.**

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

Who are kept by the power of God.

1 Pet. i. 2, 3, 4, 5.

*Evening.*

**Have mercy upon me, O God, according to the loving-kindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.**

Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

Ps. li. 1, 2, 3, 7, 10.

## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,**

And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.  
Amen.

For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me.

In burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

Rev. i. 5, 6. Heb. x. 4, 5, 6.

*Evening.*

**Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil;**

Learn to do well; seek judgment; relieve the oppressed; judge the fatherless; plead for the widow.

God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded.

Isa. i. 16, 17. James iv. 6, 7, 8.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries.**

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them.

Ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.

I will also save you from all your uncleannesses.

Eze. xxxvi. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29.



*Evening.*

**Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.**

Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.

But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth, and some to honour, and some to dishonour.

If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

2 Cor. vii. 1.    1 Cor. v. 7.    2 Tim. ii. 20, 21.

## HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

### THIRTIETH WEEK.

#### MORNING WORSHIP.

**G**OD of Love, who hast sent Thy Son Jesus Christ to be an high priest of good things to come, and by His own blood to enter in once into the holy place, having obtained an eternal redemption for us, mercifully look upon Thy people, that by the same blood of our Saviour, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot unto Thee, our consciences may be purged from dead works, to serve Thee the living God, that we may receive the promise of eternal inheritance, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* xxii. 1-5.

GO to dark Gethsemane,  
Ye that feel the Tempter's power;  
Your Redeemer's conflict see:  
Watch with him one bitter hour;  
Turn not from his griefs away;  
Learn of Jesus Christ to pray.

Follow to the judgment-hall;  
View the Lord of life arraigned.  
O the wormwood and the gall!  
O the pangs his soul sustained!  
Shun not suffering, shame or loss!  
Learn of him to bear the cross.

Calvary's mournful mountain climb;  
There adoring at his feet,  
Mark that miracle of time --  
God's own sacrifice complete.  
It is finished! hear Him cry:  
Learn of Jesus Christ to die.

Early hasten to the tomb,  
Where they laid his breathless clay,  
All is solitude and gloom:  
Who hath taken Him away?  
Christ is risen, He seeks the skies:  
Saviour, each us so to rise.

## LEVITICUS XIX. 9-17.

AND when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest. 10. And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I am the Lord your God. 11. Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another. 12. And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the Lord. 13. Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning. 14. Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but shalt fear thy God: I am the Lord. 15. Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment; thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour. 16. Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer among thy people; neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour: I am the Lord. 17. Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.

PSALM CXIX. 1-8.

BLESSED are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. 2. Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart. 3. They also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways. 4. Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently. 5. O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes! 6. Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments. 7. I will praise thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned thy righteous judgments. 8. I will keep thy statutes: O forsake me not utterly.

*Prayer.*

ALMIGHTY God, our heavenly Father! we invoke Thy name, and beseech Thee to turn away Thy face from our manifold sins and transgressions, whereby we have not ceased to draw Thine anger upon us. And because we are most unworthy to appear before Thy sovereign majesty, be pleased to regard us only in Thy well-beloved Son Jesus Christ, accepting the merits of His death in satisfaction for all our offences, that by His atonement we may become well-pleasing in Thy sight. Pour upon us Thy Holy Spirit,

illuminating our minds in the true understanding of Thy word; and bestow upon us grace, that, receiving Thy truth into our hearts with humility and fear, we may be led to put all our trust in Thee only, and live in Thy service and worship, to the glory of Thy holy name. These benefits we ask, not only for ourselves, but also for all people and nations on the earth. Bring back, O Lord, into the right way of salvation all poor captives of ignorance and false doctrine. Raise up true and faithful ministers of the word, who shall seek not their own ease and ambition, but the exaltation of Thy name, and the safety of Thy flock.

Remove and scatter all heresies, and errors, which are the nurseries of strife and dissension in Thy church; and may all Thy people be of one mind, and live in brotherly union.

Rule thou and govern with Thy Spirit all kings, princes and magistrates, who hold the administration of the sword; that their dominion may be exercised, not in avarice, cruelty, and oppression, or any other evil and inordinate affection, but in all justice and uprightness. May we also, living under them, pay them due honour and reverence, and lead quiet and peaceable lives, in all godliness and honesty. Comfort all distressed and afflicted persons, whom Thou dost visit with any kind of cross or tribulation; the nations whom Thou dost chasten with war, pestilence, and famine, or any other plague; and all men whom Thou dost afflict with poverty, imprisonment, sickness, banishment, or any other distress

of body or infirmity of mind. Grant them firm patience under their trials, and speedily bring them out of their afflictions. Confirm and strengthen all Thy faithful children, who in any place are suffering persecution for the testimony of Thy heavenly truth. Give them steadfast constancy; console them; suffer not the rage of the wicked to prevail against them; but enable them to glorify Thy name, as well in life as in death. Preserve and defend all Thy churches which at this day are labouring and fighting for the testimony of Thy blessed name. Defeat and overturn all the counsels of their enemies, their machinations and devices. Grant unto the ministers and members of Thy church true unity in spirit and in truth, that so Thy glory may be revealed, and the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ be increased and promoted, till it shall fill the whole earth. All this we ask of Thee in the name of our sovereign Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

WE bow our knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would enable us by His grace to be more and more partakers of Christ in loving Thee our God with heart, soul, and strength, and our neighbour as ourselves, thus having fellowship with the Father and the Son, and with one another. *Amen.*



HYMN, *or Psalm cxvi.* 1-8.

HARK, my soul, it is the Lord;  
'Tis thy Saviour; hear his word,  
Jesus speaks, and speaks to thee--  
Say, poor sinner, lov'st thou Me?

I delivered thee when bound,  
And, when bleeding, healed thy wound:  
Sought thee wandering, set thee right:  
Turned thy darkness into light.

Can a woman's tender care  
Cease towards the child she bare?  
Yes, she may forgetful be,  
Yet will I remember thee.

Mine is an unchanging love,  
Higher than the heights above;  
Deeper than the depths beneath:  
Free and faithful, strong as death.

Thou shalt see my glory soon,  
When the work of grace is done;  
Partner of my reign shalt be,  
Say, poor sinner; lov'st thou Me?

Lord, it is my chief complaint,  
That my love is weak and faint,  
Yet I love Thee, and adore:

O for grace to love Thee more.

JOB XXXI. 13-22.

IF I did despise the cause of my man-servant, or of my maid-servant, when they contended with me: 14. What then shall I do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him? 15. Did not he that made me in the womb make him? and did not one fashion us in the womb? 16. If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail; 17. Or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof; 18. (For from my youth he was brought up with me, as with a father, and I have guided her from my mother's womb;) 19. If I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering; 20. If his lions have not blessed me, and if he were not armed with the fleece of my sheep; 21. If I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the gate; 22. Then let mine arm fall from my shoulder-blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone.

ISAIAH. LVIII. 1-7.

CRY aloud, spare not; lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob

their sins. 2. Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God. 3. Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours. 4. Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high. 5. Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? 6. Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? 7. Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

-----

## SERMON XXX.

“LET EVERY ONE OF US PLEASE HIS NEIGHBOR FOR HIS GOOD TO EDIFICATION. FOR EVEN CHRIST PLEASED NOT HIMSELF.”

--Romans xv. 2, 3.

THERE is a pleasing of our neighbour which is very different from that here described -- a pleasing of him by chiming in with his prejudices; by flattering his infirmities; by complying with his sinful wishes; by laughing at his wicked jokes; by countenancing him in his evil ways; in short, by doing, or *not* doing, that which will insure us *popularity* with our neighbour, though at the expense of principle in ourselves. This is, indeed, pleasing him as we please the drunkard when we give him intoxicating drink, or the self-willed when we give them their own way; but such gratifying of our neighbour is not pleasing him “for his good to edification,” but rather for his injury to destruction. And nothing is more common than this sort of pleasing of each other. It is done, people say, “for the sake of peace,” “to give no offence.” With such plausible excuses, men cloak over their unprincipled and slothful selfishness and want of love to their neighbour. For if they really loved their neighbour -- if they felt themselves responsible for their

conduct towards him -- if they were concerned for his *good*, they would seek to please him consistently with that good, and in such a way as he would thank them for at the day of judgment. What we all must learn is to seek our neighbour's well-being, so that his evil should be our burden, and his good our happiness and reward. We must learn *so* to love him, as that we shall, if necessary, *displease* him, and put him to pain, and make him perhaps angry with us for a time, if in this way only we can do him good in the end; just as a kind surgeon will put us to pain in order to save our lives.

“Every one of us” must thus please his neighbour; because every one has some neighbour thus to please. Were it asked, “Who is my neighbour?” We reply, that person, whoever he be, with whom God in his providence brings us into contact; whether we meet him by accident for a few minutes only, or associate with him every day of our life; the person, in short, who can in any way be influenced by us -- by what we are, as well as by what we do. That person is our neighbour, is more or less closely “bound up in the bundle of life” with us; and in as far as we can by word, look, or action, “please him for his good,” so far it is our duty and privilege, as fellow-workers with God, to do so.

A moment's consideration will show us, that there is no one, however poor, however unknown, however unlearned, but has, at least, one talent of influence which he may use,

and which he dare not lay up in a napkin. Not only so, but that he also possesses greater opportunities of influencing one or more individuals, than any other person on earth has. Let us ask, for instance, whether there is not some one whom we know better, and come in contact with more frequently, than any others do? It may be our child or parent, or brother or sister, our fellow-workman or daily acquaintance; but some one there is whom we know better than anyone else does, and who is, therefore, in a *special* sense, our neighbor, one for whom we are therefore responsible. This one talent every man possesses, -- while thousands, from their position in society, possess many more: this one work each one of us may do for others, and, perhaps, no one else can do it so well as ourselves. The opportunity of doing this good, is a power given us by God, which is peculiarly our own. We cannot point to a single case in which this will not hold true. That old decrepit woman, who cannot stir from her chair by the fireside, may, nevertheless, day by day, "please the children who play around her knee, "for their good to edification" -- a good which may tell upon families yet unborn. That poor invalid who can scarcely move or speak, may by patience, and love, and meekness, and consideration of the feeling of others, springing from trust in God, shed a holy influence around her dying bed. That sick-nurse, who watches beside this other sleepless sufferer, may, in the silence of the night,

speak words which, by God's blessing, may end in life everlasting. That infirm man, who for support leans on his staff, may by his affectionate advices to the young -- his pious visits, rich in prayer, to his sick neighbours -- his kindly words, and peaceful happy walk before all - scatter blessings round him while he lives, and leave them behind him in the hearts of many when he dies. But not to multiply instances, or to select them from higher walks in life, it will suffice to say, that if we only remember how each one of us comes in contact with many individuals every day -- and how every hour we cannot but exercise *some* influence upon them -- we must see how we never can want neighbours, whom we have the means of "pleasing for their good to edification." This talent of doing good or evil to others, is a very solemn one. But it is a fact, and no power of ours can alter it; nor should we seek to have it otherwise; for all God's appointments are good, both for the world and for us. In order to make this great talent gain other talents, one thing is needful; but that is everything -- viz., *that we be good ourselves*. If we first please God, by giving Him our hearts for our own good to salvation, then we cannot but choose to please our neighbour for his good to edification. Should any one still ask, "Who is my neighbour?" we would refer them to the reply given by our Lord to the same question, in the Parable of the Good Samaritan.

2. But we may illustrate the duty of pleasing our neighbour in another way.

Few errors are more common in daily life, than supposing, either that others are of no importance to us, or that we are of no importance to others. These errors stand and fall together. The moment we discover how much our state is affected by others, that moment we also discover how much the state of others is affected by our own. Now, when we ask, "What are others to us" -- as if they really were nothing to us -- is it possible that we seriously believe this to be true, or that we can imagine ourselves to be so separated from our kind as to be beyond the reach of their influence? Let us consider the matter calmly. If, for example, any of us were in deep family affliction -- if we had lost a beloved wife or child, and our heart was breaking beside our lonely fireside -- and if a neighbour, that is, anyone, who was hitherto almost a stranger to us, entered our house, and spoke kind and sympathizing words to us -- shed his tears with ours, and convinced us by his whole manner that he felt for us with a brother's heart, -- could we say then, "My neighbour is nothing to me?" If we and our family were confined to beds of sickness, with little in the house to support us, and everything going to wreck and ruin; and if this man or woman visited us, cheered us up with words of hope, shared their food gladly with us and our children, and if we required it, they with ready hand



performed those little domestic duties to our household, which restore a look of comfort and neatness to our dwelling -- would such neighbours be nothing to us? If we were in spiritual difficulties and soul distresses; and if in our hour of darkness, when temptations were overcoming us, when we were backsliding from God, or when we had fallen into sin, and were by our own carelessness and godlessness becoming separated from our best friends; yea, if when we were seeking to live without God in the world, a Christian neighbour came to us -- not in the spirit of anger, to upbraid us, or in the spirit of pride to trample us down--but, in the spirit of meekness and of love, to carry our heavy burden, making it his own; grieving over our misery; helping to restore us to God, and to restore us to ourselves; affectionately warning us, encouraging us, and earnestly praying with us -- tell me, would such a neighbor as this be nothing to us? We will not multiply the various ways in which a neighbour might please us for our good. And we need not ask, if such brotherly kindness would touch our heart. We know it would. Deeds far less considerate than these excite our gratitude; we acknowledge that such neighbours would make the world look to us far brighter than in the case supposed, and life in spite of its sorrows would be a very sunshine. After such experience of goodwill from our fellow-men, we would never again say, "My neighbour is nothing to me;" but would rather confess

with thankfulness “my neighbour is everything to me: he is my help, my counsellor, my friend. I know not what I would have done without him.” Ah! then, we cannot choose but see what an effect such neighbours would have upon our good and happiness. And why? Because they were rich? No! or learned? No? they may possibly be humble unknown men and women; poor and unknown, as Jesus Christ and his parents were. What have they, then, which has made them of such importance to us? They have *hearts* -- hearts touched with the love of God and man. Silver and gold they may have none; but what they have they gave to us -- tender sympathy, willing aid, sincere prayers, sweet and tender charity; and this, thank God, the poor can give the poor; and upon the giving of this depends the world’s good and happiness, more than on aught else beside! Our neighbour has learned this grand lesson from his Master -- not to please himself, but to please us for our good; he has trampled under foot the selfish and unchristian saying, “I keep myself to myself;” and he has put in its place one more worthy a follower of Christ, “I give myself to thee.” And though this neighbour is of little importance to the big, noisy world, he is of great importance to us. He is like the candle or the food in our house -- if the one were extinguished, and the other removed, neither would be missed by the world; but they would be very greatly missed by us and by our family.

But if we now see clearly how others may tell upon our good and happiness, we hope we also see how, in the very same way, we may tell upon the good and happiness of others? What does any neighbour do to us, which we may not do to them? He commenced this kind of intercourse. Until he entered our door, we had no idea there was so much love in the world -- we had hard thoughts of men; but this kind of brotherly dealing gives us a new view of things. We begin to think, that such Bible texts as these -- “be kindly affectioned one towards another, in honour preferring one another;” “Bear ye one another’s burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ;” “Consider one another, and provoke to love and to good works;” “Love seeketh not her own” -- are not heard from the pulpit or read in a book merely, but are seen in living epistles, and are read in the lives of Christian men. Nay, that Christian neighbour has brought out of our own heart feelings of gratitude, kindness, and sympathy, which we thought were dead, but which were only sleeping there; and, by so doing, he has made us better -- he has made us happier. Well, then, *what he has been to us, we may be to others.* “Go thou and do likewise.” Some of our neighbours have hard or indifferent thoughts of us, as we once had of the world. Go and change them. Some are saying, “We have heard of Christianity, we should like to see a Christian.” Go and show them one, by opening to them a Christian’s heart and life, and not a

Christian's opinions merely. And so that good neighbour made us feel he was of importance to us, so may we as good neighbours make ourselves felt to be of importance to others. We repeat it, we need nothing else than heart which truly loves God and man -- that is, the heart of a child of God -- to be an unspeakable blessing, and of immense importance in our present place in society. Our words and example may awaken in many a now miserable home a note of gladness, which will be echoed on earth through many generations, and endure for ever in heaven. No man is common-place who loves God and his fellow-men: this makes every man great. Let us, then, never again shut our heart against our neighbour, nor, with a Cain-like spirit, ask, "Am I my brother's keeper?" but rather, with Christ-like spirit, seek "to please him for his good to edification," and to "love him as ourselves!" and I doubt not we will very soon, even in this world, have our reward -- the highest reward which a loving heart seeks -- to be loved in return.

3. But the Apostle further sets before us Jesus Christ as the great example of self-sacrificing love, when he says, "even Christ pleased not himself." Even Christ! He who is the first-born of every creature, heir of all things" -- "who is God over all, blessed for ever." Even *He* pleased not himself," but sacrificed himself for his neighbour; and we need not ask of Him who his neighbour is, who himself not

only perfectly loved the Lord his God, but his “neighbour as himself.” Christ’s neighbour was, every man. By this glorious example does the Apostle, in writing to the Philippians, exhort Christians to consider the well-being of others. “Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory; but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem others better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

“Even Christ pleased not himself.” These words describe his character. For the sake of others, He came into the world; for others He lived; for others He prayed; for others He wept; for others He died; for others He intercedes; and for others He will come again! The works and words of every day He spent upon earth, are a comment upon this beautiful picture, “He pleased not himself.”

That we may realize to ourselves the unselfishness, if I may so speak, of our blessed Master’s character, let us glance at that portion of his history which is embraced in the last week of his life; and see how, in the most

overwhelmingly trying circumstances, He ever forgot himself in seeking the good of others.

A few days before his crucifixion, He entered Jerusalem as a king: multitudes met him by the way and welcomed Him with loud hosannahs; never before had He been so honoured, or received. It was the only day of triumph He had in his life. He reached the brow of the hill which overlooked Jerusalem. "He beheld the city!" -- the city so long highly favoured by God, and now about to perish for its impenitence -- and that sight absorbs his whole thoughts. He thinks not of himself; nor is He attracted by the applauses of the people. His heart is with his eye; and both rest upon desolate Zion. He weeps bitter tears; and his wailing cry is, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! O! that thou, even thou, hadst known the things of thy peace!" In the beautiful language of Jeremy Taylor, "He wet the palms with his tears, sweeter than the drops of manna, or the little pearls that descended on Mount Hermon; weeping, in the midst of his triumph, over obstinate, perishing, malicious Jerusalem. For this Jesus was like the rainbow; He was half made of the glories of the light, and half of the moisture of a cloud; in his best days He was but half triumph, and half sorrow!" Behold Him again the evening before his death, seated at the paschal supper with his disciples! What an utter forgetfulness of himself --- what a seeking of the good of others -- does He manifest in all He

said, and in all He did! He does not ask his disciples to comfort *Him*, to sympathize with *Him*, though *He* was to be the sufferer. His whole time is occupied in pleasing *them* for their good to edification;" "Let not *your* hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid." There is not a thought about himself expressed. He warns, He exhorts, He instructs, He cheers, his disciples; and prepares them for coming trial, and for temptation. He is indeed, troubled in spirit; but it is with making the sad announcement, that one whom He had always trusted as his friend is about to betray Him.

The supper is over; "His hour was come that He should depart out of this world to his Father." Yet, 'having loved his own which were in the world, He loved them to the end.' That love, like all true love, will stoop to do the humblest acts, in order to do good to the beloved object. We read, accordingly, that "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that He was come from God, and went to God" -- what then? With the full knowledge of the glory which He had left, and to which He was about to return, and of the universal dominion which the Father had given -- yet, O! marvellous love, which seeketh not her own -- "He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments, and girded himself, and poureth water into a basin, *and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.*" *How true is it, that* "even Christ pleased not himself!"

Our Lord is in the garden of Gethsemane. He is about to pass through unheard of agony, as our Saviour -- agony immeasurable, incomprehensible! But He thinks of the good of his disciples, while "the chastisement of our peace was upon Him." He leaves them, in order to be alone in his sorrow. The sight was too trying for their weak faith. "Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder." When He finds them asleep, there are no reproaches for their want of sympathy with Him. How tender the slight rebuke! How mingled with it is the comfort! -- "What, could ye not watch with me one hour? The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak!" Even Peter's special danger, from overweening confidence, is not overlooked by Him. He would quicken him to watch and pray against temptation, by the question -- "Simon, sleepest *thou*? In all this, He was mindful of the good of others.

The cruel band of soldiers, led by the traitor, approach; they surround Jesus. His first thoughts are for the safety of his disciples -- "Let these," He says, "go away." Peter wounds Malchus: Jesus attends to the sufferer, though an enemy, and heals him!

But He is, at last, alone, in the presence of his tormentors; all his disciples have forsaken Him. He is standing before the high priest, at early dawn, after his night of toil and horror; He is buffeted, insulted, blasphemed. Yet even then He thinks of others. He is



yearning over the fallen disciple. He hears him curse and swear that he knew Him not; “And the Lord turned and looked upon Peter.” -- a look of pity, reproach, and love, which broke his heart with godly sorrow, and saved his soul.

Jesus is carrying his cross; the women of Jerusalem alone feel for Him, and they accompany Him on his way with bitter lamentations. But He “will seek the good of Zion,” rather than the comfort offered by “Zion’s daughters.” “Women of Jerusalem,” He says, “weep not for me; but weep for yourselves!” and He warns them of the coming destruction of their city!

Jesus is hanging on the cross! Never was there such an hour as this in the history of the universe. Who but God can measure the greatness of our Saviour’s sufferings when nailed to the accursed tree? “There was no sorrow like his sorrow.” Can He think of others then? Yes. The infinite love which brought Him into the world in order to live and die for others; which enabled Him, for the salvation of guilty men, to drink the cup in Gethsemane, and to endure the cross and despise the shame on Calvary; that self-sacrificing love was displayed to all around Him, while “wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities.” He thinks of his weeping, agonized mother, and commends her to his beloved disciple, saying “Woman, behold thy son; son, behold thy mother!” He thinks of a

dying thief, who cries, Remember me!” and give peace to his troubled soul by the blessed assurance, “This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise.” And before He resigned his spirit into his Father’s hands, He thinks of his cruel murderers, and cries, “Father, forgive them, they know not what they do!” Such is Jesus.

And we see the same spirit manifested in all He said and did while upon earth. He ever sought to please his neighbour, but only for his good, by the sacrifice of self. Every other pleasing is but a pleasing of self by the sacrifice of good. Thus only, let us add, can Jesus please us now, or bless us, by doing us *good*. Well might the apostle say, “He pleased not himself.”

And such is the “mind” which must be in us if we are “in Him.” “We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not Himself.” “Now the God of patience and consolation, grant you to be like-minded one toward another, according to (*i.e.* after the example of) Jesus Christ.” Let the enmity to the living God which is in our natural hearts, be slain by faith in his love to us through Christ, and then shall all enmity to our fellow-men be slain also. Let God’s love to us be shed abroad upon our hearts by the Holy Spirit, and then shall these hearts be shut no longer by wicked selfishness against our neighbour. Let us

carry our Lord's cross, and then we shall carry our brother's burden. "Hereby," says the apostle John, "perceive we the love of God, because He laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." "This is my commandment," says our Lord, "*That ye love one another, as I have loved you!*" And what kind of love? It is thus described -- "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things," and "never faileth." --Editor.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

HOW AN ANGEL WENT TO PRISON, AND WHAT HE DID THERE.

THERE are two persons whom we read of in the New Testament under the name of Herod the king. They were grandfather and grandson. The son and father that was between them was cruelly put to death by his own sire. This man, the grandfather, was very passionate, cruel, and wicked, although he is called in history Herod the great. It was he who will always be thought of as a monster, even by the little children of the world, as having tried to kill the infant Jesus, and as having slaughtered a number of innocent babes to make sure of his end. His grandson was, in bad things, only too like him. He could not try to destroy the infant Saviour, but he did make the attempt to crush his infant church and cause. He was king when the gospel was taking hold of the hearts of many people in Jerusalem by the bold preaching of the apostles, and when it was beginning to spread among the Gentiles also. Finding that the great men of the Jews were vexed at this, and wishing to please them, he determined to try and scare the followers of Jesus. So he laid hold on one of the apostles, James the

brother of John, and had him killed. Then, seeing that his bloody deed was what the great Jews liked, he thought he would take Peter's life, too. But at that time the passover was going to be observed, and he knew that though the men he wished to please would be glad to see Peter dead, they would not like his blood to be shed during the feast. He, therefore, only put Peter in prison, and charged as many as sixteen soldiers to watch him, and keep him safe, intending, after the passover, to have him slain. But there were *two* fighting against Herod's purpose, that he little thought of. The first was a praying church, and the second was the prayer-hearing God. The Christians in Jerusalem held meetings to cry to God for Peter's deliverance, and they never gave over till God sent his angel, and took him, in spite both of guards and gates, safe out of prison.

It was just the night before the bad king intended to bring Peter out, and let the people see what he was resolved to do the preachers of the gospel. All through the feast days Peter's good friends had been praying for him, but he was still in the jail. To make sure of his not escaping, the soldiers had bound him with two chains; and when he lay down to sleep, two of them lay down beside him, one on each side. Other two were keeping watch before the door. You would think there was no hope of Peter's escaping. I suppose he may have thought so himself; but whether or no, he was not anxious, for, lying between the soldiers, he had

fallen fast asleep. You have heard, I daresay, of a Scottish nobleman who slept sweetly a few hours before he was led out to die. But, while Peter was asleep, many were awake praying for him in the house of one of the Marys, the mother of John Mark; and God, who never sleeps, heard their prayers.

While Peter was lying, as has been said, he started to find some one touch him on the side, and then put his hand so as to raise him up a little. When he opened his eyes, there was a light shining all around, and a person beside him, very pleasant to look on, who asked him to get up at once. That, you may think, was not so easy for a chained man to do; especially as his chains tied him to the soldiers at his side. If he rise, he will be sure to wake them up as well. But as Peter tried to get up, the chains fell from his hands, and the soldiers slept on. You can hardly wonder that he thought he was dreaming, everything was so easy and so strange. But the person who had waked him did not give him much time to think about it, but bade him dress himself, and follow him. He did not hurry him, however, but bade him put on, first his girdle, and then his shoes, and then his cloak. God wanted to show that he could take not Peter only, but all he had, out of the prison. All this while the soldiers kept on sleeping, and did not know in the least what was going on beside them. When Peter was ready, his guide went before him, and passed the soldiers that were

outside the doors without their taking any notice. I do not know whether they had fallen asleep, or whether God had shut their eyes and their ears, but they were quite still. At length there was only one thing between Peter and freedom, but that was a great iron gate, leading to the city. If Peter thought anything about how that could be opened, he did not need to think long. For as he and his companion came near it, it opened of its own accord, as if it had been waiting for them, and knew how to withdraw its own bolts. When they had passed out, it quietly shut itself. Can you wonder that Peter still thought that he was dreaming?

On he went however, in his dream, as he supposed, till he had gone the length of one street, and then his guide disappeared. Peter stood still for a minute, not knowing what to make of it all. But soon he felt that he was really standing quite free in the street, and he said, I know quite well now what this is; God has sent his angel, and delivered me from the king's rage, and the people who expected to see me die will be disappointed of their cruel hope. What shall I next do? So he considered for a little, and then resolved to go to Mary's house where the prayer-meeting was going on, though I do not know that Peter was aware of it. I rather think he did not know about it, but thought that was the best house to go to, and be at rest till the morning. I think this because, when he found that there was a meeting, he

only told them what had happened, and went away to another place.

You may think that as the Christian people were gathered together to pray for Peter's escape, they would be quite prepared to see him walk into the midst of their company. But that was not the case. We often are not quite prepared for the answer to our own prayers. We expect God to answer us in some particular way, and when he sends his answer in another, we will hardly believe it. So Peter found it. For when he knocked at Mary's door, he was kept a long while waiting before it was opened. The servant that answered to his first knock -- her name was Rhoda -- knew his voice, indeed, and was quite sure that it was he, but she was too glad to be able to open to him at once. She felt she must first run to the rest, and say, Here is Peter! When she said it they would not believe her. They said, Rhoda, you are mad! But she said, I am quite sure of it. Well, well, said they, it must be his angel; it cannot be himself. Peter, however, went on knocking, and at length they opened, and saw him, and every one was ready to cry out, How strange, can it be you? He, however, told them the whole story, and said, Let the rest of the church know, and then went away somewhere else.

You may be sure that the soldiers who went to sleep with Peter lying chained between them, were very much astonished to find in the morning that he was gone, they



knew not, and could not guess, where. The chains were left all right, but the chained man was off. The keepers before the door could throw no light on the strange fact. They had seen no one go out. The whole band were in great wonder and fear. Poor men! They might well be; for they had a very cruel master to deal with. When Herod found that Peter had escaped, and that the keepers could tell him nothing about it, he ordered them to be killed. But poor, foolish, wicken man, he was soon in worse stead than they; for God smote him for his pride with a fearful disease. He was eaten up of worms, and died.

The Bible, which tells us this, goes on to say that God's word, which this wicked king fought against, went on to grow, and multitudes believed it. So vain it is to fight against the gospel.

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Do you know where the name of a king, other than Herod, occurs in the Bible, whom we are in the habit of calling the Great?
2. Can you state what emblem in prophecy denotes another king, also called the Great?

3. Where do we read of the slaughter of many little children, for the sake of reaching one little babe, who escaped?

4. Who first preached the gospel, so as to lead the church to say, God has sent the Gentiles also repentance unto life?

5. James, the brother of John, being the first of the apostles that died, do you know who was the last?

6. What other example have we of men quite ready to do a wicked deed of blood, who yet were very careful about observing the passover?

7. What gates did God once send an angel to shut, when one of his servants was in a strange prison for a night?

8. Do you know of a prayer-meeting of three persons that greatly helped God's people when they had a great work to do?

9. When did deliverance come to a number of good men at a late hour of their watching and toiling?

10. What prisoner was allowed to dwell by himself, with one soldier attending him?

11. Can you give two instances of people struck blind by God?

12. When did Paul dispute with a friend about John Mark?

13. Can you repeat a promise about knocking and opening?

14. Can you find another promise about what will happen if you open to one that knocks?

FOR answers to the foregoing consult Isa. xlv.; Dan. viii.; Matt. ii.; Acts x.; John xxi.; John xviii.; Dan. vi.; Matt. xiv.; Acts xxviii.; Gen. xix. and 2 Kings vi.; Acts xv.; Luke xi.; Rev. iii.

-----

*Prayer.*

O LORD of angels, we have read in Thy word that Thou givest them charge concerning Thy children, and sendest them forth to minister to the heirs of salvation. We praise Thee for this Thy care of Thy people. We have read also, as the words of our blessed Lord, how the angels of the little ones always behold Thy face. We beseech Thee to give us part in the great honour and privilege of being kept by Thy strong angels, and by Thyself. So shall we be preserved from snares and deaths here on earth, and

gathered in the great day by Thy reapers into the harvest of Thy love, to life everlasting. *Amen.*

-----

## EVENING WORSHIP.

GOD of infinite power and wisdom, by whose Spirit and the whole body of the church is governed and sanctified, receive our supplications and prayers, which we offer before Thee for all estates of men in Thy holy church; that all the members of the same, drawing near unto Thee with a true heart and in full assurance of faith, having their souls and bodies purified from all uncleanness, may hold fast the profession of their faith without wavering, and in their vocation and ministry truly and godlily serve Thee, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* cxlix. 1-5.

BEHOLD the glories of the lamb  
Amidst his Father's throne:  
Prepare new honours for his name,  
And songs before unknown.

Let elders worship at his feet,  
The church adore around,  
With vials full of odours sweet,  
And harps of sweetest sound: --

Those are the prayers of the saints,  
And these the hymns they raise:  
Jesus is kind to our complaints,  
He loves to hear our praise.

Now to the lamb that once was slain  
Be endless blessing paid:  
Salvation, glory, joy remain  
For ever on thy head.

### ROMANS III. 9-31.

WHAT then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; 10. As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: 11. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. 12. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. 13. Their throat is an open sepulchre: with their tongues they

have used deceit: the poison of asps is under their lips: 14. Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: 15. Their feet are swift to shed blood: 16. Destruction and misery are in their ways: 17. And the way of peace have they not known; 18. There is no fear of God before their eyes. 19. Now we know, that what things so ever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. 20. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. 21. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22. Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference. 23. For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God: 24. Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; 25. Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; 26. To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness; that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. 27. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay; but by the law of faith. 28. Therefore we conclude, that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. 29. Is he the God of the Jews only? is he

not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: 30. Seeing it is one God which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith. 31. Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

#### GALATIANS V. 13-18, 22-26.

FOR, brethren, we have been called unto liberty: only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. 14. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 15. But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. 16. This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. 17. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. 18. But if ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law. 22. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23. Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. 24. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts. 25. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. 26. Let us

not be desirous of vain-glory, provoking one another,  
envying one another.

-----

*Prayer.*

O ETERNAL, Almighty, and most gracious God! heaven is Thy throne, and earth is Thy footstool; holy and reverend is Thy name. We sinners are bold, through our blessed Mediator, to present ourselves and our supplications before thee. Receive us graciously, help us by thy Spirit, let Thy fear be upon us, let Thy word come unto us in power, and be received in love; cause us to be fervent in prayer, and joyful in Thy praises, and to serve Thee without distraction, that we may find it good for us to draw near unto thee.

Thou art infinite in power, wisdom, and goodness, dwelling in the light which no man can approach, yet dwelling also with the humble and contrite, and taking pleasure in Thy people. Thou hast consecrated for us a new and living way, that with boldness we may enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. Behold us at Thy footstool. Despise us not, though unworthy, put Thy fear into our hearts, that with



reverence we may serve Thee; write Thy laws in our minds, and let us all be taught of Thee. So may the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in thy sight.

O heavenly Father! Bless the word heard this day. Thy word is perfect, converting the soul; a sure testimony, making wise the simple, enlightening the eyes of the blind, and a powerful mean of salvation for all that believe. Help us, thine unworthy servants, whether we teach, or whether we be taught, to learn of Thee. We are blind by nature, wholly incapable of doing any good; and Thou wilt help none but those that are of a broken and contrite heart. We beseech Thee to enlighten our understanding with Thy holy Spirit, and give us a meek heart, free from all haughtiness and carnal knowledge, that hearing Thy word, we may rightly understand it, and rule our lives accordingly. Be graciously pleased to convert all those who yet stray from Thy truth; that we, together with them, may unanimously serve Thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life. We ask all things for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and praise evermore. *Amen.*

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

*Morning.*

**And they entered into a covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul;**

That whosoever would not seek the Lord God of Israel should be put to death, whether small or great, whether man or woman.

And they sware unto the Lord with a loud voice, and with shouting, and with trumpets, and with cornets.

And all Judah rejoiced at the oath: for they had sworn with all their heart, and sought him with their whole desire; and he was found of them: and the Lord gave them rest round about.

2 Chron. xv. 12, 13, 14, 15.

*Evening.*

**Evil men understand not judgment: but they that seek the Lord understand all things.**

For thus saith the Lord unto the house of Israel, Seek ye me, and ye shall live:

Seek him that maketh the seven stars and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night: that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth; The Lord is his name.

But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

Prov xxviii. 5. Amos v. 4, 8. John iv. 23.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee.**

Deliver me from all my transgressions; make me not the reproach of the foolish.

Blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.

Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.

Ps. xxxix. 7, 8. Ps. xl. 4. 1 Pet. i. 13. Rom. v. 5.

*Evening.*

**For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers but the face of the lord is against them that do evil.**

And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?

Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon him that hope in his mercy.

To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine.

Our soul waiteth for the Lord: he is our help and our shield.

1 Pet. iii. 12, 13. Ps. xxxiii. 18, 19, 20.

**WEDNESDAY.**

*Morning.*

**Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me.**

When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek.

Hide not thy face far from me; put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.

When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.

In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence; and his children shall have a place of refuge.

The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.

Ps. xxvii. 7, 8, 9, 10.      Prov. xiv. 26, 27.

*Evening.*

**O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee.**

Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord God of hosts, be ashamed for my sake; let not those that seek thee be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel.

O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me.

Behold God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation.

Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.

Ps. lxix. 5, 6.

Isa. xii. 1, 2, 3.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;**  
And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and  
hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God  
for a sweet-smelling savour.

But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness,  
let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;

Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting,  
which are not convenient; but rather giving of thanks.

Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of  
these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of  
disobedience.

Eph. v. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6.

*Evening.*

**Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for  
when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which  
the Lord hath promised to them that love him.**

Let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man.

Thou hast proved mine heart; thou hast visited me in the night; thou hast tried me, and shalt find nothing: I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress.

James i. 12, 13. Ps. xvii. 3.

## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:**

And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.

Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

Rev ii. 2, 3, 4. Matt. xxiv. 13.

*Evening.*

**And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth**

**they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.**

And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not.

Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals.

Ezek. xxxiii. 31, 32,      Jer. ii. 2.

## **SATURDAY.**

*Morning.*

**For I the Lord thy God am a jealous god.**

The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war: he shall cry, yea, roar; he shall prevail against his enemies.

God is jealous, and the Lord revengeth; the Lord revengeth, and is furious; the Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies.

The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked: the Lord hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet.

Exod. xx. 5.    Isa. xlii. 13.    Nahum i. 2, 3.

*Evening.*



**Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?**

Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us.

For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Rom. viii. 35, 37, 38, 39.

# HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

## THIRTY-FIRST WEEK.

### MORNING WORSHIP.

ALMIGHTY God, the former of our bodies and father of our spirits, illuminate our minds, we beseech Thee, and shed abroad in our hearts Thy love, to the intent that we may know and love Thee, and enjoying the comfort of Thy heavenly grace, seek first the righteousness of Thy heavenly kingdom, and live evermore to Thy praise, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, or *Psalm lxxi.* 15-19.

O GOD of Bethel! By whose hand  
Thy people still are fed;  
Who through this weary pilgrimage  
Hast all our fathers led:

Our vows, our pray'rs, we now present  
Before the throne of grace:  
God of our fathers! be the God  
Of their succeeding race.

Through each perplexing path of life  
Our wand'ring footsteps guide;  
Give us each day our daily bread,  
And raiment fit provide.

O spread thy cov'ring wings around,  
Till all our wand'rings cease,  
And at our Father's lov'd abode  
Our souls arrive in peace.

Such blessings from thy gracious hand  
Our humble pray'rs implore;  
And thou shalt be our chosen God,  
And portion evermore.

## EXODUS III. 1-12.

NOW Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the back-side of the desert, and came to the mountain God, even to Horeb. 2.

And the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. 3.

And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. 4. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. 5. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground, &c.

-----

### *Prayer.*

OUR voice do Thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning we direct our prayer to Thee, and look up. For sleep and safety in the night we thank Thee. We have awaked, for Thou hast sustained us. Let us awake to righteousness, and not sin. May our hands be clean and our

hearts pure this day. We beseech thee to form within us a lowly spirit, a tender conscience, and an upright mind.

O God, who art light, and in whom is no darkness at all, deliver us from all the power of darkness, and shine with grace and truth into our hearts. We need light more clearly, and life more abundantly; and there is none that can bestow these gifts but only Thou, O Lord.

Our sins have hid Thy face from us. We would not deny or even extenuate them, but would judge ourselves on account of them, and confess to Thee our faults of negligence and wilfulness, our evil thoughts, and selfish schemes, and idle words, and unruly tempers, our hardness of heart, our pride and unbelief. When we confess our sins, Thou art faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Be it unto us according to Thy word.

With pardon and cleansing, grant us renewal of mind and recovery of spiritual health, that we may attend to Thy word and vigorously address ourselves to new obedience. Deliver us from indolence, vain glory, and self-deceit; and make us, by grace, doers of the word, and not hearers only.

O let Thy hand be upon the Man of Thy right hand the Son of Man whom Thou madest strong for Thyself. We would see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, now crowned with glory and honour. Let the whole earth be filled with His glory,

and let all the nations sing His praise. Make our hearts to beat with love to Him who loved us and gave Himself for us. May we recognize in Him the foundation of our peace, the rock of our safety, the prince of our life, the star of our hope, the spring of our joy, and the author and finisher of our faith. Father of glory! give us the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of our hearts being enlightened. May we know how to give glory to Him, and receive grace from Him, for the wants of every day and every hour. In time of trouble may we find Him our burden bearer, and in times of obstruction and perplexity may He be the breaker up of our way. As the sheep of His hand, let us know His voice, and follow Him.

Deliver thou us from the deceit of our hearts, from a double mind, and feigned lips. O let integrity and uprightness preserve us. Let us not be ignorant of Satan's devices; but knowing his craft and malice, may we resist him with vigilance and quench his fiery darts on our shield of faith. Take possession of us by Thy Holy Spirit; and let there be brought forth plenteously in our characters the manifold fruit of the Spirit -- love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.

Suffer us not to lack the proof of having passed from death to life, in love to the brethren. Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity! Keep them in

the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God. Let there be maintained in Thy church, order without tyranny, liberty without confusion, reverence without superstition, and holy boldness without glorying in the flesh. And let the church, walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, be multiplied.

Our queen and country we humbly commend to Thee. Oh for that righteousness by which a nation is exalted. All institutions of education and benevolence we entreat Thee to bless for the public weal and Thy glory. Ourselves, and all whom we love, we cast at Thy feet. Heal us by Thy grace, and lead us in Thy truth, and teach us.

These and all needed blessings we ask that we may receive through Jesus Christ our Lord. And, as we receive, we offer to Thee no money or price of our attainment or desert, but own ourselves debtors to grace, and render thanks and glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O GOD, from whom all blessings flow, grant us through  
Jesus Christ the remission of all our sins, the knowledge of  
Thy truth, and a heart to obey Thy holy word; preserve us  
ever in the unity of Thy faithful church, in integrity of  
Christian faith and uprightness of Christian life, in love of  
Thee and our neighbours, and in the hope of the life  
everlasting. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* lxxxviii. 19-24.

O HOLY Saviour, Friend unseen!  
Since on thine arm Thou bid'st me lean  
Help me throughout life's varying scene  
By faith to cling to Thee.

Blest with this fellowship divine,  
Take what Thou wilt, I'll ne'er repine;  
Ev'n as the branches to the vine  
My soul would cling to Thee.

Without a murmur I dismiss  
My former dreams of earthly bliss,  
My joy, my consolation this,  
Each hour to cling to Thee.

What though the world unfaithful prove,  
And earthly friends and joys remove --  
With sure and certain hope of love  
Still would I cling to Thee.



## PSALM CXXXII.

LORD, remember David, and all his afflictions: 2. How he  
swore unto the Lord, and vowed unto the mighty God of  
Jacob; 3. Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my  
house, nor go up into my bed; 4. I will not give sleep to  
mine eyes, or slumber to mine eyelids, 5. Until I find out a  
place for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of  
Jacob. 6. Lo, we heard of it at Ephratah; we found it in the  
fields of the wood. 7. We will go into his tabernacles; we  
will worship at his footstool, &c.

-----

## SERMON XXXI.

“AND ITTAI ANSWERED THE KING, AND SAID: AS THE LORD LIVETH, AND AS MY LORD THE KING LIVETH, SURELY IN WHAT PLACE MY LORD THE KING SHALL BE, WHETHER IN DEATH OR LIFE, EVEN THERE ALSO WILL THY SERVANT BE.”

-- 2 Sam. xv. 21.

THE poets and moralists have had much to say of the sweets of friendship; but the best things ever said on the subject are in Holy Writ. Listen to the Hebrew poet and moralist: “A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity:” “Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart; so doth the sweetness of a man’s friend by hearty counsel.” These words of Solomon’s may be abundantly illustrated from the life of his father David. It would be difficult to name any one in history so gifted as the son of Jesse with the power of attracting and retaining enthusiastic friends. Jonathan loved him as his own soul. His warriors were so devoted to him, that he had but to say, “O that one would give me a drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!” and three heroes broke through the host of the Philistines, drew water from the well, and brought it to their king.

The friend, whose fidelity our text records, was no Israelite, but of Gath, and so a Philistine. How strange the

history of David in relation to Gath! The first enemy whom he faced in a battle-field, and slew, was Goliath, a Gittite. Yet it was a Gittite, and the very king of Gath, who proved to him a friend and kind protector, when the king of Israel pursued him to take away his life. David was captain of the body-guard to Achish, and in his turn had Gittites for his own body-guard in Jerusalem. There can be no doubt that some of the young men of Gath, being under David's command when he served Achish, were so drawn and bound to him in admiration and affection, that they resolved to cast in their lot with his. So they left the land of the Philistines, and settled in that of Judah. We read of Obed-edom the Gittite, a man of such approved character, that the king left the ark under his care for three months, and thereby brought the blessing of the Lord upon the Gittite's household. Ittai was another Gittite, and so trusty and competent an officer, that King David assigned to him the command of one of the three grand divisions of the loyal army, in the decisive battle which ended at once the revolt and the life of Absalom, in the wood of Ephraim.

It has been a common thing for monarchs to maintain a corps of foreign troops in immediate attendance on their own persons; and history has told more than once how such mercenaries have proved faithful to death, when the native army played false. But the loyal Gittites can hardly have been at any time mere mercenaries. They followed David

from Gath, when he was without a crown; and having loved, not his crown or kingdom, but himself, they were proof against all the blandishments of Absalom, and, cleaving to David in adversity as well as in prosperity, they passed on, six hundred men, before the king.

Least of all was Ittai, the commanding officer of those Gittites, a mercenary, or soldier of fortune. Not only was he proof against the wiles of Absalom, but he could resist the generously meant proposal of the king, that he should look to his own interest: -- "Wherefore goest thou also with us? Return to thy place, and abide with the king; for thou art a stranger, and also an exile. Whereas thou camest but yesterday, should I this day make thee go up and down with us? seeing I go whither I may, return thou, and take back thy brethren: mercy and truth be with thee." So he had an opportunity to return, but refused to consult his own safety or advantage. It is plain, that the charm of David's character had won his enthusiastic attachment; and reverence for David's God had given a firm religious tone to his mind. Ittai, in his answer, acknowledged Jehovah; and to Jehovah's servant he clave in time of reproach quite as closely as ever he had done in days of bright prosperity. It was not David's pay, or David's court, that the good man loved, so much as David himself, the anointed of Jehovah; so he would not turn back, or accept any other king-- an Anti-David. Better far, he held, to be with the true king in

the wilderness, or even in the grave, than to be with Absalom and his traitor host, with corn and wine abounding. Oh, noble Ittai! true heart, friend indeed! “As Jehovah liveth, and as my lord the king liveth, surely in what place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also will thy servant be.”

See what a follower and friend of Jesus Christ should be. He is the Son of David, God’s anointed, and our king. Whatever takes away our homage from him, though it be fair and plausible as Absalom was, is a deceiver and an antichrist.

Let Attai’s coming after David out of the land of the Philistines stand for the conversion of a sinner to God, the drawing of a soul to Christ. It is as the coming of Ruth out of the land of Moab, to dwell under the wings of Jehovah, God of Israel. It is as the coming of Simon Peter and Andrew, when they left their nets straightway; and of the sons of Zebedee, when they immediately left their boat and their father, to follow the Saviour. It is as the coming of Saul of Tarsus, when he first counted the things which were gain to him loss for Christ.

But one such act of choice is not enough. He who has been converted will be proved, whether he adheres to his first love, and continues by grace resolved to choose the reproach of Christ, and bear it, if need be, without the camp. Thus Ittai is proved, whether he will still adhere to David in

peril and reproach. Ruth was proved in her first days of poverty in Bethlehem, whether she would indeed cleave to Naomi, and Naomi's people, and Naomi's God, or was still a Moabite at heart, merely seeking bread. The twelve apostles were proved at Capernaum. Our Lord saw the people and the disciples disposed to honour him, and he searched them by his word; but the Jews murmured at him, and strove among themselves. Then, when his discourse was ended, "many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him." There still remained the inner circle of apostles. "Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?" Are you offended at my word, or weary of me and my cause? Then Peter's noble reply evinced a man of like spirit with Ittai: "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life; and we believe, and are sure, that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." Yet Jesus searched the company of the apostles, too. "Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" In like manner, the apostle Paul was often and severely tested. Reproaches and persecutions for the Saviour's name seemed to say to him, O Paul! dost thou still count all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ, thy Lord? And he answered without hesitation, "Yes, doubtless, I do so count." The longer I live, the more I am confirmed in that mind. Paul indeed spoke like another Ittai: "I am ready, not to be bound only,

but also to die at Jerusalem, for the name of the Lord Jesus.”

Depend on it, that to some test the Lord will bring all of us who have confessed his name. Have we only assumed a form of godliness, or have we felt the power thereof? Have we followed Christ for reputation and advantage, or do we love him for himself, and are our hearts bound up with him? Do we take up our cross daily and follow him? Is it our joy to be with him in the face of a world that knows him not? and is it our prayer unfeigned, that we may not go back, or turn from him at all?

There are times of reproach that try men’s souls. Just as there was a day when Absalom seemed to triumph, and all the time-servers went over to his side, because they thought him sure to win the kingdom; so there have been, and will be again, days in which the antichrists seem to prevail, and religion itself becomes showy and flesh-pleasing, and the tide of opinion runs strongly against the meekness and lowliness of Christ. Many fail at such a time, and turn back, or fall in with the current religious fashion; but the day of trial brings out to view the true and honest heart. If there be defection of others from Christ, so much the more that heart adheres to him. Or if there be trouble to bear as a Christian, so much the dearer is Christ. Samuel Rutherford wrote to Lady Kenmure: It is a mercy that the saints have His cross laid to their hand for nothing;

for I know no sweeter way to heaven than through free grace and hard trials together; and one of these cannot well want another.”

When our Lord Jesus tries his own, and even puts it to them again and again, whether they will abide with him or go away, he is by no means indifferent to the result, for he loves to have them remain as the companions of his tribulation and bearers of his cross. Pass over with Christ, if so be ye suffer with him, that you may also be glorified together. “And David said to Ittai, Go and pass over. And Ittai the Gittite passed over, and all his men, and all the little ones that were with him.”

O sweet procession of “the little ones,” marching on in the reproach of David, rather than stay in the city to choose that traitor Absalom! Be admonished, ye followers of Christ, to take your little ones with you. The earlier, the better. Before they are of an age to make choice for themselves, or to apprehend all that the Bible tells of Christ and antichrist, choose Christ for yourselves and for them too, and train them to go on with Christ; let their earliest impressions be of his love and his authority. As the Gittites kept their children, as well as themselves, out of Absalom’s way, so keep your children, as well as yourselves, out of the way of every antichrist, and bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.



The conduct of Ittai, at the head of those loyal Gittites, there is no need that we any further eulogize. We cannot read the narrative without giving our approval and applause to Ittai, and Hushai, and Barzillai; while we reprobate the treason of Ahithophel, and the rude malice of Shimei. We have touched lightly on the reason of Ittai's noble conduct. Let us ponder it well.

What kept the Gittite officer firm and true, when so many born Hebrews forsook their king? Not political shrewdness, foreseeing Absalom's early fall; for Ahithophel was the most astute statesman in the land at the period, and political shrewdness sent him over to Absalom's side. Not the instinct of a soldier of fortune, for, as we have pointed out already, Ittai had the king's sanction to march his men back to Jerusalem, and accept service under the usurper. The key to his fidelity, is his love unfeigned: "Surely in what place my lord the king shall be, whether in life or death, there also will thy servant be."

Be instructed, ye who name the name of the Lord, that the only thing which will keep you faithful to him when others turn back, is unfeigned love to him who first loved you, and drew you from your state of ignorance and sin, your Gath of the Philistines, to fellowship with himself. From the day that Ittai first was drawn to the son of Jesse, a new life opened upon him. He felt the beauty of David's character, and the excellence of David's faith in the eternal,

invisible God of Israel. Thereafter, year by year, as he enjoyed the king's confidence, and came into sympathy with his mind, and entered fully into the devout confidence in Jehovah so characteristic of the psalmist-king, the Gittite became less and less a Gittite, more and more an Israelite indeed, a lover of God and the king. Should it not be so with you also, O follower of Christ? That was a mournful day, when first you saw yourself a sinner, far off, as in some city of the Philistines. Yet it was a happy day, when the Son of David revealed himself to you, and drew you, and you "followed on." In that very hour, love to Jesus sprung up in your heart. But, surely, you love him more to-day, than then. Perhaps you have not the same freshness of feeling, the same surprise or impulse in your love; but you now have more knowledge of Christ, and of what he has done for you and others like you, and surely you have a deeper, and firmer, and more intelligent attachment to him, than you had when you first knew the Lord. Jesus Christ has not only drawn you out of Gath, but has kept you with himself in Jerusalem, treated you as a friend, employed you as a servant, and supplied all your wants. He has given you every opportunity to increase your knowledge of him -- the holy beauties of his character, the meekness of his heart, the tenderness of his love, and all the glory of God in him. Is not the effect of this, under the grace of the Holy Spirit, to make the thought of forsaking

Christ hateful -- the thought of being separated from Christ terrible, to you? Surely, in what place so ever our Lord the King may be found, there also would you his servant be: --

“Whom have we in the heaven above,  
Whom on the earth, save Thee, to love?”

After all, it is due to grace, and not to us, that we do not turn back from Christ. It was David who kept Ittai, at the very time when he proposed to him to depart; held him fast by that wonderful charm of personal loveliness which made for David such enthusiastic friends, and which was at this period increased, in the eyes of the honest Gittite, by the sorrow through which his lord the king was made to pass. So it was Jesus Christ who by his beauty of holiness, and by the drawing of his secret grace, kept the apostles, even when he said to them, “Will ye also go away?” And it is Jesus Christ who holds us now by the cord of his love, the force of truth, and the confirming energy of the Holy Ghost. Let no flesh glory in his presence. It is because we are apprehended of Christ, and led by his Spirit, that we, or any of us, play the part of Ittai rather than that of Shimei. And such is our Lord’s grace, that whether we live or die, we are his. We can say with the Gittite, “Whether in death or life.” “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or

nakedness, or peril, or sword? --- I am persuaded, that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Beloved! follow the king, the Lord’s Anointed; follow hard after him. Let there be no ambiguity in your allegiance, no halting between two opinions. Absalom had no part in Ittai the Gittite; David possessed him all. So let Antichrist, in whatever form he beguiles unstable souls, have nothing in you. Let Christ have all. Throw yourselves without reserve into his humiliation and his battle; and joy awaits you when the king comes back again. See that you are his without guile, at the brook Kedron, and in the wilderness, and in the wood of Ephraim; so shall you share his triumph, and be with him in Jerusalem at his appearing and his kingdom.

“He comes with his reward: ’tis just at hand;  
He comes in glory to his promised throne.  
My soul rejoice: ere long thy feet shall stand  
Within the city of the Blessed One;  
Thy perils past, thy heritage secure,  
Thy tears all wiped away, thy joy for ever sure.”

-- D. FRASER, M. A.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

HOW A LITTLE GIRL DIED, AND WAS BROUGHT BACK TO LIFE  
AGAIN.

THE story about this little girl has, as it is told in the Bible, another remarkable story in the midst of it, like the reading of a parenthesis in a sentence. It will be best to tell both in the same connected way.

In one of the synagogues that stood, in the time of our Lord, near the western shore of the lake of Tiberias, perhaps in the town of Capernaum -- there was a ruler of the name of Jairus, who had a little daughter of whom he was very fond. We know this from the way he spoke of her, and from what he did for her. One day this child (who was not, however, a mere child, but a grown girl twelve years old, though her father called her his little daughter) -- one day, I have said, this child fell sick, and was very ill indeed. Everything, we be sure, was done that could be thought of to cure her; but she grew worse and worse till she appeared just about to die. The father and mother were greatly distressed. There was only one thing more that they could do, to save the life of the child. If they could get to Jesus, of whom they had heard and perhaps seen much, and in whose power to heal disease they firmly believed,

they would ask him to come and keep her from dying. So Jairus, learning that he had come back from beyond the lake where he had lately been, and was now not very far off, set out in haste to seek him, and pray to him to come and heal his child. He had some distance to go; but he went fast, and came to Jesus at a place where he was teaching, and a great crowd were standing round about him. Jairus pressed eagerly through them all, and said to Jesus, O come and help me; my little daughter is at the point of death; indeed, I fear, she must be dead by this time: but come and lay thy hands on her, and she shall live. Jesus at once rose to go, and the people hearing what Jairus had said followed him close, and pressed upon him in a thick throng.

As he passed along the road, with his disciples and Jairus and the multitude, there was another person who thought that her time for seeking Christ's help had come. This was a woman, who had been ill for just as many years as Jairus little daughter had lived. The lines of those two lives for all that time had been stretching on under God's eye -- one in sorrow and pain, one probably in child-joy till now. They were to meet to-day in the help of Jesus, and to be twined together in the page of the Bible till the end of time. The illness of the woman was a very painful and wasting one, and one, also, which made her unclean according to the law, so that she could not mingle with her neighbours, or go to the house of God, like others. She had tried a great many

doctors, and had been subjected by them to a great deal of painful treatment, but had never been bettered by anything, but grew, on the whole, always worse. There was no help of hope for her, except she could go to Jesus, and get him to cure her. But from all she had heard of him she felt very sure, that if she could only get his help, all would be well. Nay, she was sure that so full was he of power, if she could only touch the fringe of his coat, she would be perfectly whole. But she said to herself, How can I go to him, such as I am, and ask him to heal me? But when she saw a great crowd passing along after him, she said, I will try now, and steal behind, and touch his clothes. So she mingled with the throng, and pressed till she got near him, and stooping down, touched the tassel that hung on the edge of his upper coat, and in one moment felt that she was quite healed. She had got health at once, although it looked as if she had stolen it.

But though at first she felt happy, as I suppose that nobody had taken notice when she touched Jesus, it soon appeared that he knew all about it, and would not allow it to be hidden. He would not allow it, for her sake; it was not that he wanted to bring it out for his own fame, except, indeed, to teach us all to the latest day that there is none good as he is. So, turning around in the press, Jesus said, Who touched my clothes? He knew, of course, quite well; but he wished to bring the woman out, that he might show

how much pleased he was with her great faith, and yet teach her that she was not right in thinking she could get good from him without his being aware of it, and without his will giving it. The disciples were a good deal surprised to hear their Master say in the midst of a crowd, Who touched me? For they thought that it could not but happen in the throng that many must from time to time touch him. They could not help but showing their surprise by saying that they thought so. But Jesus let them know that he meant a special kind of touch; he asked about the touch of faith, for he knew that he had answered it by sending forth healing power. The woman soon perceived that he knew all, and came, and knelt down before him, and told him the whole truth. He heard her, well pleased, and said to her, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague. She felt already that she was healed; but Jesus meant that she was to continue well, and she never was ill again of that disease all her life. Perhaps he mean more; perhaps he meant that she was not only healed of her bodily disease, but of the sin on account of which God had afflicted her. No doubt she went away home with fuller views of the character of Jesus than she had before, even when she said, If I may but touch his clothes I shall be whole.

I dare say that Jairus was at first sorry that anything should happen to keep Jesus a moment longer on the road than could be helped. He was perhaps thinking all the while



of his child, and wishing that the woman had taken another time to come and be healed. But then his faith would be helped by seeing how full of grace and power Jesus was, when even through his garment he could give healing to a touch. Almost immediately after, however, his faith met with a sore shock. For messengers came to Jairus, saying, It is of no use troubling the Master any further; your daughter is dead. Now he had spoken before as if that was not unlikely; but it was another thing to hear that it had actually taken place. So his faith shook greatly, like a tower or a tree in a storm. Jesus saw this, and came to his help, saying to him, Don't be afraid: only believe. And so they went on together.

By and by they reached the house, and when they came near to it, it was easy to see that the child was dead. For there were the hired mourners, with musical instruments, according to the custom of the East in those days, making a great noise of weeping and playing. But Jesus, wishing perhaps to show them that where there is the hope of resurrection such noisy sorrow is not right, said to them, Why are you making such ado? the damsel is not dead; she is only asleep. He knew what he was going to do; but I think he meant also what may make us sure that the daughter of Jairus was a good girl. Even if he had not come to wake her then, he would come to wake her at the last day. The people did not understand him; and knowing that

the child's life was really gone, they laughed at Jesus scornfully, as if to say, we know better than that; go in and see. He did go in, and saw. But he would not let the noisy people go with him. He put them all out. He took only the child's father and mother, and three of his disciples -- Peter, and James, and John. He was about to do a great work, and only those who are prepared by faith and love to see it, and only as many as were needful to witness it, were to be beside him when Life was to waken death.

The six went in -- One and five. There, on the bed, lay the child dead -- already getting cold. Jesus stepped to the side of the couch; put forth his warm living hand; took the dead hand of the child's body, and said, Maiden, rise! The very syllables he used have been kept fresh for us -- Talitha-cumi -- in the native tongue of the Jews at that time. As he spoke, the damsel, just as if waking from a sweet sleep, rose up, and walked across the room. The parents and the disciples could not tell what to think for wonder.

Jesus stood by, calm and glorious. Then to prove that her restoration to life was real, and showing how kind and thoughtful he was, and also wishing to teach how this resurrection was only to an earthly life, and not so good as the resurrection to which he will raise all his own at last, he said, Give her something to eat.

-----

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Where are we told of a little boy-child, who when grown was taken ill, and died on his mother's knees?

2. Who was it that, in a sinful way, did not think of God when he consulted the physicians?

3. Can you find a psalm where the writer says he turned to God when all refuge failed him?

4. In what respect are tribes of Israel, apostles of Jesus, and hours of the day alike? And why should this question be suggested by the story?

5. Where do we read of persons who were obliged to live outside the gates of the city, because they were unclean?

6. Who was it that did something which Jesus said should be told of her wherever the gospel went; his prophesy being fulfilled by the very book which tells us it was made?

7. What question, early in the Bible, was put, not for information, but to bring people out, to be taught?

8. On what memorable occasion did Jesus, when he saw the faith of one of his disciples shaken, stretch his hand to help?

9. What great funeral mourning was it that drew the attention of people that were not themselves acquainted with the dead person?

ANSWERS to the foregoing may be found by consulting the following chapters: -- 2 Kings iv.; 2 Chron. xvi.; Psalm cxlii.; James i.; Matt. x. and John xi.; 2 Kings vii.; Matt. xxvi; Gen. iii; Matt. xiv.; Gen. 1.

-----

*Prayer.*

O GOD, Thou gavest us life. We have lived these years of our lives by Thy goodness. Thou hast given us food to eat. We thank and praise Thee for all. Thou knowest how long we have to live. May we, by Thy grace, so live that when we come to die, people who know Christ's love may say, They are not dead, but sleep. So, at last, may we all hear Him say, Rise, and wake to immortal life. *Amen.*

-----

## EVENING WORSHIP.

O GOD of our life, who hast compassed us this day with Thy faithfulness, cover us at eventide with the shadow of Thy wings, and teach us with a calm spirit, an humble mind, and a believing heart, to present our evening sacrifice, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm iv.* 4-8.

THAT kind eye, which cannot sleep,  
These defenceless hours shall keep:  
By my heavenly Father blest,  
Thus I give my powers to rest: --

Heavenly Father, gracious name;  
Night and day his love the same:  
Thou, my ever-bounteous God,  
Crown'st my days with various good.

What if death my sleep invade,  
Should I be of death afraid?  
Whilst encircled by thine arm,  
Death may strike but cannot harm.

With thy heavenly presence blest,  
Death is life, and labour rest.  
Welcome sleep or death to me,  
Still secure, for still with thee.

### MATTHEW III. 1-17.

IN those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, 2. And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. 3. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness. Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. 4. And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey. 5. Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, 6. And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. 7. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8. Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: 9. And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. 10. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. 11. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost,

and with fire: 12. Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. 13. Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. 14. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? 15. And Jesus, answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. 16. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: 17. And low, a voice from heaven, saying, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.

-----

*Prayer.*

O GOD of peace, who didst bring again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do Thy will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in thy sight through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*



We thank Thee for this Lord's day, as a witness to us that the Lord liveth, and was dead, and is alive for evermore. And as on the first day of the week, when He had risen, He showed Himself to the disciples at evening, speaking peace, and breathing the Holy Ghost, so may our Lord reveal Himself to us at eventide, and make our waiting spirits glad. Him, having not seen, may we love; in Him, though now we see Him not, believing may we rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.

Alas! for our sluggish minds, and wandering thoughts, forgetful hearing, and formal lifeless worship! For Thine own name's sake, cast Thou our sins and provocations behind Thy back.

So far as we have received it, enable us to hold forth the word of life. May our garments be kept unspotted from the world, our lights kept shining in the world, and our hearts be kept in thought and desire above the world. Sanctify us, O Father, through the truth: Thy word is truth.

Wherever and by whomsoever the gospel has been preached to-day, let it be attended by signs following, in the pricking of men's hearts, and their conversion to God. Comfort the mourners with thy word of promise. Bind up the broken in heart, and heal all their wounds. Hear the cries of men in jeopardy on land or sea. Watch over lawful travellers, and teach them the way to the heavenly city. Deal gently with sick folk, and raise their faith and love to

thyself. Accept the service of little companies that have not been able to join the great congregation. And let such as have been alone to-day know that they are not alone, that thou art with them.

Cause the hallowed influence of the Lord's day, and the sweet savour of Christ, the Lord of the sabbath, to abide with us throughout the week. Withdraw not thy Holy Spirit from us, but let His solemn stamp and seal be on us with increasing clearness. Deliver us from the power of indwelling sin, by the Almighty power of Thine indwelling Spirit. Let us accomplish our warfare in the strength of grace, that we may obtain our rest and reward in the Christian's home in glory.

Cover us with Thy wings in the watches of this night. We are weary, but thou faintest not, neither art weary. We must sleep, but Thou, O keeper of Israel, dost not slumber. So Thou watchest over them that sleep in Jesus; and when they awake they shall be satisfied with Thy likeness. Prepare us for the duties of this life, the falling on sleep when our work is done, and the blessed awaking in the resurrection of the just. Now to God, only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. *Amen.*

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

#### *Morning.*

O Lord thou art my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful things; thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth.

For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall.

Thou shalt bring down the noise of strangers, as the heat in a dry place; even the heat with the shadow of a cloud: the branch of the terrible ones shall be brought low.

Isa. xxv. 1, 4, 5.

#### *Evening.*

The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.

And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee; for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee: for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.

For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the Lord behold the earth;

To hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death.

For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

Ps. ix. 9, 10.

Ps. cii. 19, 20.

Ps. ciii. 11, 12.

## TUESDAY.

### *Morning.*

Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him.

And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.

For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name.

I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts.

Luke xv. 1, 2.

Luke xix. 10.

Isa. lxv. 1, 2.

### *Evening.*

But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard.

He answered and said, I will not; but afterward he repented, and went.

And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir; and went not.

Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.

Matt. xxi. 28, 29, 30, 31.

## WEDNESDAY.

### *Morning.*

And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.

Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few:

Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

Matt. ix. 35, 36. 37. 38.

*Evening.*

Teach me thy way, O Lord; I will walk in thy truth:  
unite my heart to fear thy name.

I will praise thee, O Lord, my God, with all my heart;  
and I will glorify thy name for evermore.

Thou O Lord, are a God full of compassion, and  
gracious, long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.

O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me: give thy  
strength unto thy servant, and save the son of thine  
handmaid.

Shew me a token for good; that they which hate me  
may see it, and be ashamed; because thou, Lord, hast holpen  
me, and comforted me.

Ps. lxxxvi. 11, 12, 15, 16, 17.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

Thou art my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast  
thee away.

Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for  
I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee;  
yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my  
righteousness.

Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded: they shall be as nothing; and they that strive with thee shall perish.

For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee.

Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel: I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

Isa. xli. 9, 10, 11, 13, 14.

*Evening.*

Thus saith the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee; and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people --

That thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness Shew yourselves: they shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places.

They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them.

Isa. xlix. 8, 9, 10.

## FRIDAY.

### *Morning.*

Woe is me for my hurt! my wound is grievous: but I said, truly this is a grief, and I must bear it.

My tabernacle is spoiled, and all my cords are broken: my children are gone forth of me, and they are not: there is none to stretch forth my tent anymore, and to set up my curtains.

O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.

O Lord, correct me, but with judgment; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing.

Therefore thus saith the Lord, If thou return, then will I bring thee again, and thou shalt stand before me.

Jer. x. 19, 20, 23, 24. Jer. xv. 19.

### *Evening.*

Let mine eyes run down with tears night and day, and let them not cease: for the virgin daughter of my people is broken with a great breach, with a very grievous blow.

Hast thou utterly rejected Judah? hath thy soul loathed Zion? why hast thou smitten us, and there is no healing for us? we looked for peace, and there is no good; and for the time of healing, and behold trouble.

We acknowledge, O Lord, our wickedness, and the iniquity of our fathers; for we have sinned against thee.



Do not abhor us, for thy name's sake; do not disgrace the throne of thy glory: remember, break not thy covenant with us.

Jer. xiv. 17, 19, 20, 21.

## SATURDAY.

### *Morning.*

See, O Lord, and consider; for I am become vile.

Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.

From above hath he sent fire into my bones, and it prevaieth against them: he hath spread a net for my feet; he hath turned me back; he hath made me desolate and faint all the day.

The yoke of my transgressions is bound by his hand; they are wreathed, and come up upon my neck: he hath made my strength to fall;

Lam. i. 11, 12, 13, 14.

### *Evening.*

Yet saith the house of Israel, The way of the Lord is not equal. O house of Israel, are not my ways equal? are not your ways unequal?

Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord God.

Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.

Eze. xviii. 29, 30, 31, 32.

# HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

## THIRTY-SECOND WEEK.

### MORNING WORSHIP.

O GOD, the King of Glory, who hast exalted thy Son Jesus Christ with great triumph into the kingdom of heaven, grant, we beseech thee, that we by faith may also in heart and mind thither ascend, and with Him continually dwell, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

### HYMN, *or Psalm cxlix.* 1-4.

PRAISE the Lord, ye heavens, adore him;  
Praise him, angels, in the height;  
Sun and moon, rejoice before him;  
Praise him, all ye stars of light.

Praise the Lord, for he hath spoken;  
Worlds his mighty voice obeyed;  
Laws that never shall be broken,  
For their guidance he hath made.

Praise the Lord, for he is glorious:  
Never shall his promise fail.  
God hath made his saints victorious:  
Sin and death shall not prevail.

Praise the God of our salvation,  
Hosts on high his power proclaim;  
Heaven and earth, and all creation,  
Laud and magnify his name.

#### EXODUS XXXIII. 7-19.

AND Moses took the tabernacle, and pitched it without the camp, afar off from the camp, and called it the Tabernacle of the congregation, which was without the camp. 8. And it came to pass, when Moses went out unto the tabernacle, that all the people rose up, and stood every man at his tent door, and looked after Moses, until he was gone into the tabernacle. 9. And it came to pass, as Moses entered into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the Lord talked with Moses. 10. And all the people saw the cloudy pillar stand at the tabernacle door: and all the people rose up and worshipped,

every man in his tent door. 11. And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh to his friend. 12. And Moses said unto the Lord, See thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people: and thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me. Yet thou hast said, I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight. 13. Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in the sight: and consider that this nation is thy people. 14. And he said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. 15. And he said unto him, If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence. 16. For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? Is it not in that thou goest with us? So shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth. 17. And the Lord said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name. 18. And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. 19. And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy.

## EXODUS XXXIV. 29-35.

AND it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him. 30. And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone; and they were afraid to come nigh him. 31. And Moses called unto them; and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned unto him: and Moses talked with them. 32. And afterward all the children of Israel came nigh: and he gave them in commandment all that the Lord had spoken with him in mount Sinai. 33. And till Moses had done speaking with them, he put a vail on his face. 34. But when Moses went in before the Lord to speak with him he took the vail off, until he came out. And he came out, and spake unto the children of Israel that which he was commanded. 35. And the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face shone; and Moses put the vail upon his face again, until he went in to speak with him.

## ROMANS XI. 1-18.

I SAY then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. 2. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, 3. Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. 4. But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. 5. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. 6. And if by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace; but if it be of works, then is it no more grace; otherwise, work is no more work. 7. What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded. 8. (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear) unto this day. 9. And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling block, and a recompence unto them: 10. Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway. 11. I say then, Have they stumbled

that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. 12. Now, if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness? 13. For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: 14. If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. 15. For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall he receiving of them be, but life from the dead? 16. For if the first-fruit be holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches. 17. And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive-tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; 18. Boast not against the branches: but if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.

-----



## *Prayer.*

O GOD, our voice shalt Thou hear in the morning: in the morning will we direct our prayer unto Thee, and will look up. We offer unto Thee, as is most meet, the sacrifice of thanksgiving, even the fruit of our lips, giving praise unto Thy name for all the varied and gracious benefits which day by day we receive from Thee. If we would declare and speak of thee, they are more than can be numbered, embracing in their range every moment of our being, and every circumstance in our lives. We are ashamed, and blush to lift up our eyes to Thee our God, when we think of the way in which we have requited Thine unwearied and fatherly kindness. Too often has Thy goodness, which should lead us to repentance, been perverted by us into an encouragement to shut Thee out from the counsels of our hearts, and to follow our own evil devices. When we reflect on what we have been and on what we have done, the memory of the past overwhelms us with shame and self-loathing: How then shall we stand before Thee, who art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and who canst not look upon sin? For anything we can do our ruin is inevitable, nor could we charge Thee with dealing hardly or unjustly with us, wert Thou to subject us to the indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, which are the allotted

portion of all who obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness. Yet, O God of grace, suffer us not to add to our guilt and to deepen our condemnation by mistrusting the testimony of Thy word regarding Thine ability to save to the uttermost all that come unto Thee through Christ. Relying on Thy grace as flowing out through Him even to the chief of sinners, humbly yet hopefully we lift up our hearts with our hands unto Thee in the heavens, beseeching Thee to be merciful unto us, O God, be merciful unto us; for our souls trust in Thee.

Thou, O Lord, who searchest the heart and triest the reins of the children of men, knowest, that, however we may attempt to disguise it from ourselves, our sole aim in prayer too often is that we may be freed from the guilt of sin, and so escape the punishment which is its due. The abominable thing which Thou hatest appears not to us in the hideous and revolting light in which Thy pure and holy eye sees it; and at best we do not regard it with that utter abhorrence which its inherent and unutterable vileness is fitted to inspire. Do Thou, O God, who art light, and in whom is no darkness at all, pour in upon our minds that true light which will enable us to see sin as being in every form and degree exceeding sinful; that in its very nature it is the death of the soul; that we cannot rise to life or be partakers of salvation but by its utter destruction within us, and by the infusion into our minds of that knowledge and

righteousness and true holiness in which Thine image consists.

It hath pleased Thee in Thy good providence to give us to see another day of the Son of man. May we receive from him grace to keep the sabbath from polluting it, and to take hold of Thy covenant. May we be brought unto Thy holy mountain, and made joyful in Thy house of prayer, and may our burnt-offerings and our sacrifices be accepted on Thine altar. Far from us be the counsel of the wicked, who say of the Sabbath, What a weariness is it! And who, through the pride of their countenance, call not upon God. May the Holy Spirit help our infirmities, and by His mighty and gracious influence so disengage us from the world and its vanities, that we shall devote all the energies of our nature to Thy service. May Thy presence be felt by us to be an awful yet blessed reality. May we see the power and the glory of our God in the sanctuary; and while those who have their portion in this life urge the vain and godless inquiry, Who will show us any good? let the earnest longing of our hearts be, Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us. May the Spirit of grace be poured out from on high upon all flesh, that all in man that is opposed to Thy holy nature, may disappear from the earth, and righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost universally prevail. Grant, O God of love, these our prayers, for Jesus' sake. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O LORD, give us to know Thy Son Jesus Christ as the true God, who took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and who being found in fashion as a man, humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, for our salvation. Grant us for His sake the forgiveness of all our sins, and into His image may our minds be transformed. May we hear His voice saying unto us, Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, and may His Spirit so enlighten us, and enlarge our views of Christian doctrine and duty, as to save us from the fatal error of resting in a name to live, while we are dead. *Amen.*

HYMN, or *Psalm* xl. 7-10.

BEHOLD my servant! See him rise  
Exalted in my might!  
Him have I chosen, and in him  
I place my supreme delight.

On him, in rich effusion pour'd  
My spirit shall descend;

My truths and judgments he shall show  
To earth's remotest end.

Gentle and still shall be his voice;  
No threats from him proceed;  
The smoking flax he shall not quench,  
Nor break the bruised reed.

The feeble spark to flames he'll raise;  
The weak will not despise;  
Judgment he shall bring forth to truth,  
And make the fallen rise.

#### DEUTERONOMY XVIII. 15-22.

THE Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; 16. According to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb, in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. 17. And the Lord said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. 18. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words

in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. 19. And the word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah, saying, 20. Thus saith the Lord, If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; 21. Then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites the priests, my ministers. 22. As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured; so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me.

#### I. JOHN IV. 1-8.

**BELOVED**, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world. 2. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: 3. And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. 4. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. 5. They are of the world; therefore speak they of the world,

and the world heareth them. 6. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. 7. Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. 8. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

-----

## SERMON XXXII.

“THOU HAST A NAME THAT THOU LIVEST, AND ART DEAD.”

--Rev. iii. 1.

BETWEEN the diseases of the body and the sins of the soul there are many features of a striking and instructive resemblance. They originated together in rebellion against God; they advance together in the production of suffering and misery; and if unremedied, they terminate together in temporal and eternal death. But in no circumstance is the resemblance more striking than in that fatal self-deception with which they are so often accompanied. It is owing to this self-deception that, though man can never become insensible to pain, nor hope to evade the universal sentence of death, it is yet by no means uncommon to find him acting as if perfectly unconscious of the progress of years or the ravages of disease, and resting in the confident anticipation of long life and enjoyment and success; while to every eye but his own he appears under the most manifest symptoms of approaching dissolution. And just so is it with the sinner. He acknowledges the the general charge that he is, indeed, guilty before God; he admits the general belief that he must appear before the judgment seat of Christ; yet, voluntarily ignorant of the demands of the law;



unacquainted with the determined alienation of his heart from God; forgetting the conversion and renovation which the gospel requires -- he is supported by the baseless hope of an indiscriminating mercy, and rests contented with the name and profession of an outward religion, though unaccompanied with one single movement of the life of God in the soul.

The text, which forms part of our Lord's address to the church at Sardis, suggests the inquiry when it may be said to a church, "Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." In answer to this inquiry, we remark --

*I. That a church may be said to have a name to live while she is dead, when she has the name of Christian, without the doctrines of the gospel.*

1. The most important discovery in the word of God is that of redemption, by the Lord Jesus Christ, from sin, and death, and misery. One of the most vital doctrines must therefore be what relates *to the person of the Redeemer*. On this subject we may view the opinions of professing churches under three heads. By some the Redeemer is considered a mere man, in all respects, as to nature, like ourselves. By others he is held to be the Word that was with God and was God -- "God manifest in the flesh."

With respect to the first: if the Redeemer were a mere man, in all points like ourselves, subject to prejudice, error, weakness, sin, then may we say of our faith, "Surely we

have preached in vain, and you have believed in vain! we are yet in our sins.” If we know our own hearts, we must feel that a Saviour no better, or only a little better, than ourselves, can never be a fit object for the faith, the hope, the dependence of sinners, nor give movement or life to the church of God. But should the Redeemer be of a more elevated nature; should he rank among angels, as one of those spirits who, during the unnumbered ages that have elapsed since the commencement of creation, have been advancing in wisdom, and holiness, and power; still, though the Saviour were an angel, man is but a little lower than the angels, and would therefore have to depend on an arm little stronger than his own. Nay, as all but God himself is liable to change; as he is declared to have even charged his angels with folly; this Saviour, this Redeemer, might fall from God, and be banished into that misery from which the gospel, by him, proposes to rescue sinful man.

The power of a creature, however exalted, can never give life to the church, There is, in the awakened conscience of a sinner, a fear that can find no repose but in the bosom of the Eternal, and can put no confidence in any redemption but that which is effected by the arm of Omnipotence. The first movement of the life of hope in the penitent sinner, and consequently the life of hope in the church, originates from receiving Christ as “God manifest in the flesh.”

The life of the soul is to know God with feelings of love and conformity to his image. Now were we even to admit, what the Scriptures will by no means warrant us, that the works of nature afforded to man, at his creation, a perfect revelation of the being, attributes, and will of God; still this revelation could serve no longer than man continued to hold his original and natural relation to his Creator. Should it then appear that man by sin has fallen into a new and unnatural relation to the Creator, there is required a new manifestation of God that man may again be enabled to know God, and again have spiritual life in the knowledge of God. Philosophers have darkened our eyes with the discoveries and stunned our ears with the praises of “natural religion;” but, alas! of what avail to man is “natural religion,” since the condition of man himself is “unnatural?” His natural state was innocence and immortality; his unnatural state is sin and death. While obedient to God, man knew God loved him; but where has God told him he will love him through an enemy? While in innocence, he felt God’s protection; but where has God told him he will save him though guilty? And even if God can love and pardon the guilty sinner, where shall the sinner look for the evidence of that love and pardon? If the solution of these questions be not furnished by creation, we have internal evidence that, in order to his restoration to spiritual life, another manifestation of God was necessary to

sinful man. Let us then examine creation, that we may find whether, as the source of “natural religion,” it affords to the sinner any manifestation of God as ready to pardon his iniquities.

Ascend we with astronomy to the sun, the moon, and the stars; in all their pages of light and of glory we read not a record of pardon. Descend we to the earth, the scene of our sin, our misery, and our death; and neither in the sea, the land, the mountain, the plain, the qualities of plants, or the nature of animals, do we find one evidence how or whether God will pardon. Or enter we into the secret recesses of our souls: conscience has there recorded our sins; but, instead of revealing to us whether God will pardon, her eye wanders unsatisfied for a ray of reviving hope, and to every visitant it is her earnest but unsatisfied inquiry, “What shall I do to be saved?” Here, then, there is internal evidence, that there was required a new manifestation of God to meet the new situation to which man was reduced by sin; to supply to the awakened conscience the deficiency of nature, which did only reveal the Creator, but not “the sin-pardoning God;” and to save him from ignorance, and sin, and misery, and death, by restoring him to the knowledge and love of God, wherein consisteth his spiritual life.

Let us then hold steadily in view, that the object of God was to reveal himself to man in a character not discoverable

in nature -- that of the “sin-pardoning God;” and let us turn an attentive eye to the record of revelation for the description of the person who proclaims the pardon.

The evidence of this record has been variously arranged. It may be divided into four stages: -- The evidence of prophecy, before the Redeemer was manifested in the flesh; the evidence of the Redeemer himself, during his manifestation; the evidence of his inspired evangelists or apostles, who spoke under the infallible teaching of the Holy Ghost; the evidence of our Lord himself, after he had ascended up into glory. I shall then briefly advert to the harmony of the scriptures upon the assumption that the Saviour was “God manifest in the flesh,” and the want of that harmony, on the assumption of his being a man or a created angel.

Before proceeding to examine the evidence in detail, it may be observed, that as the object of the New Testament dispensation was to explain and fulfil the types and prophecies of the Old Testament, so, we are naturally and necessarily led to the New for the explanation of what is dark or difficult in the revelation or phraseology of the Old. This observation premised, let us proceed to examine the first stage of the evidence -- the prophets who foretold the coming of our Saviour.

In Isaiah, vii. 14, explained by Matt. i. 23. The Saviour is announced by the name of “Immanuel,” “God with us.”

In Isaiah, ix. 6, the prophet declares, “Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace.” In these words he is foretold “a child born,” and by this character we perceive his human nature. He is also announced as the “mighty God;” and by this description we discover his divine nature. He is also styled the “Prince of peace;” and by this description we recognize him as uniting both natures in one person, and so becoming the mediator of peace between God and man. In Isaiah, xlv. 6, “thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of Hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.” Let this portion of scripture be explained by Rev. ii. 8 -- where Jesus, who was dead and is alive, declares himself to be the first and the last -- and it necessarily follows that he is the Lord, besides whom there is no God. Thus did the prophets speak of our Saviour, when they beheld his day and his glory afar off. But speaking as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, they testified that he should be “God manifest in the flesh.”

In the second stage of the evidence let us hear our Saviour himself. John v. 17, 18, “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.” If the phrase, “Son of God,” by which our

Saviour is generally distinguished, be a Hebrew idiom, we have at least the advantage of a Hebrew interpretation, and the Jews understood by it equality with God. John x. 30, our Saviour says, "I and my Father are one." On this the Jews took up stones "to kill him;" alleging, in justification of their violence, "because that thou, being a man, makest thyself a God."

In the answer of our Saviour in the 38th verse, instead of the refutation of an error, if into one they had fallen, he appeals to his works, and draws this conclusion, "that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him." Had the Jews been in error when they affirmed that our Saviour asserted his divinity, would he not have corrected or avoided such equivocal phraseology? Observe, on the contrary, how firmly he adheres to it, even at the hour of death. When questioned, Mark xiv. 61, "Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" by which it is evident the Jews understood "equality with God," Jesus answered, "I am."

In the third stage of the evidence we examine inspired apostles, who wrote of our Saviour after his ascension. John i. 1, 14, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." Acts xx. 28, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers--to feed the church of God, which

he hath purchased with his own blood.” Rom. ix. 5,  
“Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the  
flesh, Christ came; who is over all, God blessed for ever.” 1  
Tim. iii. 16, “Now without controversy, great is the  
mystery of godliness; God was manifested in the flesh,  
justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the  
Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.”

In the fourth stage of the evidence we have our  
Saviour’s own testimony, when exalted to glory. Rev. xxii.  
20, “He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come  
quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.” Here we  
perceive, as the first step of the illustration, that the person  
coming quickly is the Lord Jesus. At the 12th and 13th  
verses we find him declaring, “Behold, I come quickly. I am  
Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and  
the last.” Here we perceive, as the second step of the  
illustration, that the Lord Jesus is the Alpha and Omega.  
Let us now turn to Rev. xxi. 6, 7: He that sat upon the  
throne, said, “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the  
ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which  
is to come, the Almighty.” Rev. iv. 8, The four beasts,  
(literally, living creatures) rest not day nor night, saying,  
“Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which is, and which  
was, and which is to come.”

We have thus adduced the testimony of prophets of old,  
of our Saviour on earth, of his apostles who spoke by the



Holy Ghost, and of our Saviour himself, ascended into glory. They have all testified that Jesus was “God manifest in the flesh;” and whilst men vainly cavil and argue against it on earth, we hear the testimony repeated by angels in the adorations of the highest heaven.

For the supreme deity of our Saviour farther or higher evidence can neither be expected or demanded. Upon no other principle than that of his supreme deity can we account for the love of Christ” being the prominent object and the governing motive through all the New Testament. “God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son”: “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and gave his Son to be the propitiation for our sins:” “The love of Christ constraineth us thus to judge, that we should live unto him who died for us, and rose again.” Now if Christ were a man like ourselves, or a created being of any possible order, where do you find this mighty love? Were he either man or angel, will not the love of some of his apostles vie with his own as a motive to our love and obedience? Let us compare, for example, the love of Christ and that of Paul. The one labours in teaching about the space of three years, during which he is sometimes in danger, but not injured. He confines his labours to the narrow boundaries of Judea, a land that may be traversed from Dan to Beersheba in the space of a few days; performs, indeed, many wonderful works, but the

benefit of which is confined to a comparative few of the Jewish nation; with apparent difficulty works a miracle of kindness for the Sidonian woman, because an alien from the family of Israel, lastly he dies a grievous death, but without any peculiar visible circumstances to distinguish his love to mankind from that of many who had devoted themselves for their friends or for the country. Now, with this history compare the conduct of Paul. No sooner does he receive the commission of the gospel, than Judea becomes too narrow for his labours of love. He carries it to Arabia. He returns to Jerusalem to testify the gospel. He traverses Asia, preaching salvation through all its cities. During this time he is tried with hunger, and thirst, and nakedness; with perils by land, and perils by sea; with perils by robbers; and, a trial still harder to be borne, with perils from his own hard-hearted and ungrateful countrymen. In preaching the gospel he endures such a continued and complicated affliction, that he protests unto God he died daily; yet under this pressure of trials, love to the Saviour sustains and impels him in his course. Asia becomes too narrow for his labours of love. He passes into Europe. He preaches the gospel through its cities, and states, and kingdoms, His heart bleeds for his kindred according to the flesh, and he returns to Judea that he may testify to them the gospel of salvation. He is committed to prison; appeals to Caesar; preaches the gospel while a prisoner of Rome, a pattern of

indomitable patience in suffering, and of zeal the most ardent in the activities of benevolence. He finally closes his mortal journey by shedding his blood in confirmation of his sincerity. Now, if love is to be estimated by energy of character, by the extent of labours, the intensity of suffering for the object of affection; or finally, by laying down our life in defence of our cause -- then I do not hesitate to say, that the love of Paul would fairly come into competition with that of Christ, or outweigh it in the balance of public estimation. Yet after all this, the Scripture is silent about the love of Paul, and filled in every page of the New Testament with the argument of the "love of Christ." This fact can only be accounted for on the principle, that the humiliation of Christ was God's stooping to man; that the love of Christ was the love of God to man; and in this God commendeth to us his love, that "God being manifest in the flesh," Jesus laid down his life for the purchase of our salvation.

2. The second doctrine upon which depends the life of the church, is *the atonement of sacrifice which Christ our Lord has offered for sin*. The supreme deity of our Saviour demonstrates this his power to save if he would. The sacrifice he has offered exhibits the power exerted and salvation accomplished. The humble and cordial and efficient acceptance of the doctrine of Christ's atonement, is the very life-pulse of the church.

The evidence of this important doctrine may be considered as exhibited during six different stages: -- It may be viewed as figured in the sacrifices of the law. From the days of Abel, who offered the firstlings of his flock, till the days of Christ, who offered himself without spot to God, the sacrifices bear testimony that “without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin.” We have the same doctrine declared by John the Baptist, when he came in the spirit of Elias to prepare the way of the Lord. John was our Saviour’s witness, that all men might believe; and pointing to him with the finger to direct the people’s faith -- “Behold,” saith he, “the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.” We may consider the doctrine as taught by our Saviour himself: “This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for the remission of the sins of many.” We have it as explained by the inspired apostles of our Lord: “In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins.” We have the doctrine explained as understood by saints in glory, who had already entered into their everlasting rest. Now, though all men on earth should have expected salvation by inadequate means, or to arrive at glory by an erroneous road; there can be no hesitation in believing, that those who had already attained to heaven must have known the means of their success, and the road they had travelled. Let us listen to them: -- “And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts and

in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain.

When he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou was slain and hast redeemed us unto God by thy blood.” Let any man examine this series of evidence. It commences nearly coeval with creation; it is exhibited in the legal sacrifices; it is foretold by prophets; it is announced by the Baptist in our Saviour’s presence; it is recorded by our Saviour himself a few hours before his death; it is preached by apostles to Jews and Gentiles: it is the theme of saints in the kingdom of their rest; it runs uninterrupted and unvarying along the stream of four thousand years, till the testimony is sealed and revelation completed: let all this be examined, and must we not then conclude that the doctrine of the atonement is a necessary principle to the life of the church? The believer lives, because Jesus died for him. “He bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness.”

3. The third doctrine upon which depends the life of the church, is *that which relates to the Holy Spirit and his influences*. The doctrine of his existence and energy is revealed in the very commencement of the word of God. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And

the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” That this Spirit is the moving power in restraining from sin, in exciting to faith, repentance, love, and obedience, is manifested in the historical record of Noah: “My Spirit shall not always strive with man” Of this Spirit our Saviour promises, “Your heavenly Father will give his Holy Spirit to them who ask.” And of this Spirit the apostle declares he makes the heart of the believer his temple and witnesseth with our spirits that we are the children of God. The supreme deity of the Holy Spirit is manifest from the following scriptures: -- “Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie unto the Holy Ghost? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God:” “The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God:” “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile that temple, him will God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are:” and, “Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people;” “Ye are the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you.” The entire efficacy of religion is, by our Saviour, ascribed to the Holy Spirit: “Verily I say unto you, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.”

Having convinced the soul of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, it is the office of the Holy Spirit to take of the

things of Christ and show them unto the believer. These doings of Christ are -- his glorious nature, yet lowly humiliation; the atonement of Christ, whereby the sinner beholds his iniquities forgiven and his transgressions blotted out; the gift of the Spirit in the hand of Christ, whereby the polluted soul becomes acquainted with sufficient means of purification, and the saddest and weakest heart finds comfort and strength; and finally, the glory that shall hereafter be revealed in all them that love God. These are the things of Christ which the Holy Spirit witnesseth to the mind, and by the living impress of which upon the understanding and the conscience the soul of the sinner is sealed unto the day of redemption.

4. In the sum of these doctrines we discover the fourth principle upon the influence of which the life of the church depends -- *the doctrine of free grace*. The practical reception of this doctrine in the church lies at the foundation of a religion for sinners. How do you expect to be pardoned? is the first question in such a religion. The common answer returned is, "If I repent and amend my ways God will pardon me." I am aware thus runs the full current of popular and inconsiderate theology. As no man can be saved without repentance, it is therefore concluded that men are saved on account of their repentance. But if men are saved on account of their repentance, then is salvation of works, not of grace. Now the scriptures assure us that we

“are justified freely by grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus;” and that “by grace we are saved through faith, and that not of ourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.” As we live in a philosophical age, perhaps it may be of some importance to show that the principles of the soundest philosophy can be exhibited in strict subservience to this testimony of scripture. It is then a principle of the soundest philosophy, that “we are not to assign to any effect more causes than are adequate to its production.” In scripture, then, the pardon of sin is ascribed to one cause, “the blood of Christ;” why then ascribe it to another, the sinner’s own repentance? The simple fact is, the pardon of sin is not the *effect*, but the *cause*, of repentance. The love of God in sending his Son into the world, the free grace of God in pardoning sin, are the motives that work upon the sinner’s soul. He loves because he was first loved; and sincerely repents because he is freely pardoned.

These are the doctrines by whose mighty energies the church of God arises to life and glory. These were the doctrines that gave life to the labours of Paul, and of Peter, and of John, and the noble army of martyrs and confessors of the truth. These are the principles -- obscured during a long night of mental darkness, or entombed through ages of spiritual death -- which again sprang to life in the morning of the Reformation, and propelled the life-pulse of their



divinity through the renovated churches. These are the living doctrines, which warmed the hearts and guided the pens and gave eloquence to the tongues of Luther and Calvin and Zuinglius and Melanchthon and Knox. These are the doctrines which, in more modern times, stirred within the souls of Wesley and of Whitfield, when they burst irresistibly over those barriers of formality within which a cold and lifeless and almost heathenish theology had entrenched herself. These are the doctrines by which they stirred up the life of God in the cold hearts of multitudes sleeping in sin and the shadow of death. These are the doctrines which sent an Elliot and a Brainerd and a Swartz and a Vanderkemp and a Martyn to the Indian, the Hottentot, the Hindoo, and the Persian. These are the doctrines which wafted life around the globe to our antipodes in the South Seas, and made the scattered islands to blossom as the gardens of God. These are the doctrines by which the church shall live, unchanged by time, and which shall hail the Redeemer in her hymns, and her sermons, and her prayers, when he shall come the second time without sin unto salvation.

II. *The Church may have a name to live, and be in reality dead, when orthodoxy in opinion is substituted for morality in practice.*

Our Saviour has attributed sanctification to the belief of the truth; yet the word of God has denounced deserved

wrath against those who hold or imprison the truth in unrighteousness. The life of the church must be seen in the fruits of the Spirit growing from the seed of the truth. For as bodily life is not a principle that we understand by its own nature, but is merely seen and acknowledged in its outward effects; so the spiritual life is not to be evidenced by a mere mental possession of the doctrines of truth from which it springs, but by a visible exhibition of their fruit unto holiness. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; and they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, we must also walk in the Spirit.

III. *The Church may have a name to live, while in reality dead, from an external morality, without humility and piety.*

It is a favourite object with those called philosophical Christians, to discard all importance from the belief of the truth, and to attach every thing valuable to moral conduct. And, indeed, could it be proved that genuine morality, having equally the love of God and man for its motive and its object, could exist without the belief of the truth, then might it be granted that the doctrines we believe are of little importance. But so long as practice must arise from principle, the value of our outward conduct must be estimated by the nature of the inward principles from which

it springs. The fact is, that whenever men begin to extol morality, and depreciate doctrinal truth, they are generally found to be equally strangers to both. They have a name to live in some partial and conventional virtues -- virtues founded in pride and self-love and which therefore are frequently the parents of the most revolting crimes. Of this we have a remarkable instance in the case of the Pharisees. They prided themselves upon the unimpeachable correctness of their outward morality; yet our Saviour tells them, "I know you that ye have not the love of God in you." And the fruit of their morality was awfully exhibited in their prosecution and crucifixion of the Lord of life and glory. The life of the church, produced by the Spirit of God, is truth in the understanding, the love of God in the heart, humility because of our unworthiness, watchfulness unto prayer, and holiness in all our conversation.

In conclusion, the text discovers to us the danger of substituting the name for the life of religion. When we reflect on the life of our Redeemer, and when we perceive how little the churches are conformed to his image, then the bearing and application of the epistle in the text should fall heavy upon every ear, and sink deep into every heart. The various conditions of the churches of Asia may be viewed as so many prophetic pictures of all the churches upon the face of the earth; and the epistles of Jesus to these several churches, as impressive declarations of that providential

government which he exercises over them to the end of the world. Let us, then, be “watchful and strengthen the things that remain that are ready to die.” Should the church ever forsake the Rock of ages the fabric will crumble into ruin; but so long as she rests on the foundation, Christ Jesus the Lord, “God manifest in the flesh,” she shall remain, through the changes and injuries of time, a temple unprofaned by the foot of the enemy -- a building of God amidst the ruins of the universe.

Now unto Him that is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory, to the only wise God, our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

-- HENRY COOK, D.D.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

ONE night when Paul had come to a town of the name of Troas, on the eastern shore of the narrow sea which separates Asia and Europe on the south, he had a vision which was sent to him by God. He had been led to Troas against his own mind, and the vision explained the reason to him. The Holy Spirit wanted to lead him into Greece, to preach the gospel there. So when he had been brought to the sea-port town I have named, he had a vision in the night. There seemed to stand by the side of his bed a man whom he knew to be a Macedonian, and as he stood he said, Come over and help us. When Paul rose up and thought on what he had seen and heard, he saw why he had not been allowed to go into Bithynia, which he had wished to visit, and felt quite sure that God wished him to cross the sea, and to preach the gospel to the Greek peoples in Europe. He did not stay an hour longer than he could help at Troas; but finding a ship he crossed the sea to a place called Neapolis -- you might say *Naples*. He was now in Europe. But he did not stop there, but pushed on to Phillipi; a chief town, indeed the capital, of that part of Macedonia which he had reached, and what was then known as a Roman Colony.

Here he stayed for some days, and then the things happened of which I am now to tell you.

The sabbath day observed by the Jews came round; and Paul, learning that there was a place of prayer by the river side, thought he would go and talk with the people who might gather themselves together. He went, accordingly, and sat down and spoke to the worshippers. They were chiefly, perhaps wholly, women; they do so often go more to prayer than men. Now, among the rest there was one whose name has become very well known, in consequence of what happened that day. She was called Lydia; she was not a native of Philippi; she belonged to Thyatira, a town in Asia; but she had crossed the sea, I suppose, to carry on her merchandise, and was living in the Macedonian town when Paul came to it. She was a seller of purple cloths or dyes. She was not a Jewess; but she had learned to fear and love the God of Israel, and had become a proselyte. She did not know anything as yet about Jesus being the Messiah promised of God. But when she heard Paul speak of him, she listened with great attention, and became convinced that he had spoken the truth, and brought to her good news of great joy. God had, by his Spirit, opened her heart to attend and believe. So, as soon as she was quite persuaded that Jesus was the Saviour, she wanted to confess him, and both herself and her household were baptized. Then she said to Paul, If you think me a

true Christian, come and stay in my house; and she would not hear of his saying no. So he went and staid there.

Some days after, Paul was going to the place of prayer with his Christian companions. As he was on his way, a poor girl possessed by an evil spirit -- who had been used by persons who owned her as a slave to tell fortunes to silly people, and so to bring her masters a great deal of money -- came after him crying out, These are the servants of the Most High God, come to show us how to be saved! Paul did not at first seem to heed her. But she kept following him whenever he appeared with his friends, and crying out as before. So at last he saw that Satan wanted to bring a bad name on him and the rest, as if they were in compact with the fortune-tellers; and he was sorry also for the poor slave, oppressed of the devil. So he turned round, and said, In the name of Jesus Christ, I order you, bad spirits, to come out of this damsel. He had no sooner said it than the girl became quite sane and well, and she molested Paul no more.

But her masters were very angry. They could not use their slave any more to delude the people, and get money for telling them what they pretended only those possessed by the gods could know. They got hold therefore of Paul and his friend Silas, and dragged them into the public market-place, where the magistrates held their court. They took them before the rulers, and said, Here are Jews who have come over from Asia, and they are causing great

trouble in our city, telling the people to do things which Romans, as we in Philippi are, should not observe. They are in fact, turning the place upside down, and destroying our customs. Then there was a great hubbub. The crowd, hearing that Paul and his companions were against their Roman privileges, made a great noise, and the magistrates thought something really dangerous and frightful was about to happen. Up they rose and said to the officers of the court, Go, strip these men's clothes off, and beat them. The officers were called lictors, and they did as they were bidden. So Paul and Silas were taken and were very severely scourged, and then they were carried away to prison, and strict charges were given to the jailer to take care and keep them safely. So he put them into the inner room of the prison, out of which they could not get except by coming through the outer room; and to make matters surer still, he put their feet into stocks, and locked them fast.

Here, then, were these two men, sore, bleeding with the stripes they had received, and fastened by the feet in a cold, shocking place. But they were not unhappy. They had borne all this for Christ's sake, and he had not forsaken them. What do you think they did in the prison? Why, as if it had been a palace, and the best thing possible had happened to them, they began to sing. They recollected some psalms and changed them together. The prisoners in



the outer cell were quite astonished. They had heard plenty of oaths and curses in prison, but never sounds like these before. So they passed as near the door as their bonds would allow, to listen. It was by this time twelve o'clock at night. There was another, besides the prisoners, hearkening to Paul and Silas. God heard their praises and prayers, and answered them. In a moment a great earthquake shook the place the whole prison. Every door opened, every chain fell from the prisoners' arms and feet, and they might all have fled if they had liked. But not one of them moved. The jailer had gone to sleep, but the earthquake waked him. So, as soon as he saw all the doors open, he supposed every prisoner would be gone; and knowing that he must answer for their safe-keeping with his life, he thought he might as well kill himself at once, and took a sword out of its sheath to stab himself. But Paul knew what he was going to do, and cried out, We are all here; don't hurt yourself. Then a change came over the poor heathen's spirit. He saw that the men he had treated so harshly the night before, must be sent from the Great God. He began to think about words he had heard them speak. He felt himself a sinner, and he did not know what to do to get quit of his fears about God's anger. So he called for a light, and rushed in to where Paul and Silas were, and said, O tell me how I may be saved.

You may be sure Paul was very glad to hear him ask about salvation. He told him at once about Jesus, and said to him that if he would trust Him, he and his whole house would be saved. Then a most singular congregation gathered around the apostle. Prisoners, jailer, servants, children, all hearkened, while Paul told the story of Christ and the cross. The jailer heard the glad news with eagerness and joy. He believed, and was baptized, and all his house with him. Then he took the prisoners he had thrust before into the worst cell, and washed their wounds and gave them food, and did not know how to make enough of them. I suppose never was such a night in a prison before or since, though many of Christ's servants have preached him in prisons, and seen wonderful things there. But in the Philippian jail we may suppose that for the first time, at least, jailer and prisoners praised and prayed together, happier than many kings that were that night in their palaces.

The earthquake startled the whole city, and the magistrates must have thought it had come to teach them that they had been too rash and had done wrong; for they sent in the morning to the prison, and said, Let these men go. Paul have them another fright: for he sent back word, We are Romans, and you have broke the law by beating and imprisoning us; you must come yourselves and take us out. Glad were they to do it; and to ask them as a favour to leave

the city. They went to Lydia's house, and bade their friends farewell, and passed on to preach the gospel elsewhere.

-----  
QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Do you remember a remarkable miracle which was wrought at Troas by the apostle Paul?
2. Can you describe an instance in which it appeared, after a time, that God had allowed a crime to be committed, to bring much good about by the person who suffered by it?
3. Who was it that prayed by night on a mountain?
4. Can you give an account in which wicked spirits bore witness to Christ's being the Son of God?
5. What did some of Christ's enemies allege to be the secret of his power to cast out devils?
6. What parties in another town were very angry because Paul's preaching led people away from worshipping idols, and so hurt their trade?
7. On what other occasion did Paul's Roman citizenship stand him in good stead?
8. Can you think of a psalm that would have been suitable for Paul and Silas to sing in the prison?
9. Where have we an account of a great many anxious inquirers about the way of being saved?

ANSWERS to the foregoing questions will be easily found by consulting the following chapters: -- Acts xx.; Gen. l.; Matt. xiv.; Mark v.; Mark iii.; Acts xix.; Acts xxii.; Ps. xlv; Acts ii.

---

*Prayer.*

O LORD God of providence, Thou leadest all that trust Thee in a right way. They often do not see their road clearly; but when they ask Thee to guide them, they are not left to err. May we always be willing to take Thy way, and to go and do as Thou shalt show us Thy will. O God, the heathen nations are crying still for help; pour out Thy Spirit on all the churches that they may pray more, and give more, and send more, to save the perishing. And O, wherever the gospel is preached, open hearts to receive it in faith and love. May ours always be open to it. We ask all for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

---

## EVENING WORSHIP.

O ETERNAL God, who, according to Thy faithful promise, didst send the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in His holy comfort, through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with Thee, in the unity of the same Spirit, world without end. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* l. 9-15.

TO our Redeemer's glorious name  
Awake the sacred song!  
O may his love (immortal flame!)  
Tune every heart and tongue.

His love what mortal thought can reach?  
What mortal tongue display?  
Imagination's utmost stretch  
In wonder dies away!

Let wonder still with love unite,

And gratitude and joy,  
Jesus be our supreme delight,  
His praise our best employ!

LUKE II. 26-38.

IT was revealed unto Simeon by the Holy Ghost that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. 27. And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the customs of the law, 28. Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, 29. Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: 30. For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, 31. Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; 32. A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. 33. And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. 34. And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; 35. (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also) that the thoughts of many hearts shall be revealed. 36. And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; 37. And she was a widow of about

fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers day and night. 38. And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for the redemption in Jerusalem.

-----

*Prayer.*

ETERNAL Son of the Eternal Father, begotten of the Father before all worlds, and before all time; Thou art in the Father, and the Father in Thee; Thou and the Father are one. What things soever the Father doeth, O Eternal Son, these also Thou doest. All things were made by Thee, and without Thee was not anything made that was made; Thou art the Life; Thou art the Light; Thou art the Word; Thou art God.

Thou wast made flesh, and didst dwell among us, and we beheld Thy glory -- the glory as of the only begotten Son of the Father, full of grace and truth: O blessed Son, Thy essence, infinite, absolute, eternal, was inclosed in the narrow limits of a temporal and finite humanity. Thou didst leave the heavens; Thou wast born of a virgin by the power of the Holy Ghost; wast a child, and didst become a man -- a

man without sin, and yet a true man; Thou didst hunger and thirst; Thou hast, like us, known want and sorrow, O Eternal Son of the Eternal Father, Thou wast tempted; Thou hast striven; Thou didst obey; Thou hast suffered; Thou becamest man to save man, by Thy life, by Thy death, making atonement by the blood for his iniquity.

O Eternal Son of the Eternal Father, Thy Father hath given Thee power over all flesh, that Thou shouldest give life eternal to as many as He hath given Thee. Thou art to us the most precious gift of His, for in Thee we find all in abundance. If we abide in Thee, and Thou in us, we shall have no want. Thou art the true bread of life, of which if we eat, our souls shall never hunger more. Thou art our light; in Thee we shall never be in darkness. Thou art our joy; we shall not be in sorrow. Thou art our truth; we shall not be in error. Thou art the door; who shall hinder our entering? Thou art our righteousness; who can then condemn? Thou art our peace; who can trouble us?

And yet, O Eternal Son of the Eternal Father, we are often without light, without joy, without peace, without the bread and water of life, without a throne of grace.

Wherefore? Because we do not come to Thee; because we do not dwell in the riches that Thou hast vouchsafed to us, we are often poor, and wretched, and miserable, and blind, and naked. Notwithstanding Thy eternal strength, we are liable to stumble every day, every moment. Thou hast



given us Thy holy commandments; we have transgressed them Thou hast given us Thy Holy Spirit, and we have grieved it. We are prodigal sons, who have wasted their inheritance.

Pardon our sins, O Lord. Have mercy, have mercy upon us. O by Thy precious blood, which speaketh better things than the blood of Abel, speak for us. We are humbled; we are ashamed before Thee; we make no excuse; our only hope for our broken spirit is to find salvation by Thy cross. Help us, O Lord, for of ourselves we can do nothing. The end is too high for us; we cannot attain unto it.

O Almighty Son of the Almighty Father, since we cannot come to Thee, do Thou come to us, and save us. Enter the door of our hearts; knock, and do Thou Thyself open it. Rouse us from all false security, from idleness, from the lusts of the flesh, from the love of the world, from all vanity. Enable us to come to Thee, and us let not be like Lot's wife, who looked back to old sins.

Eternal Son, come and be in truth our Saviour. Govern entirely our whole being, according to Thy word. Grant that heavenly life may be communicated to us, and abound in us. Come; our souls wait for thee, O Lord, as the bride waiteth for the bridegroom. And when thou art come, take up thine abode in us.

O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Thou whom the heavens cannot contain, let us be for ever Thine abode on earth, in heaven, and for all eternity. *Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

*Morning.*

**We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren: he that loveth not his brother abideth in death.**

Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him.

Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

1 John iii. 14, 15.    Exod. xxii. 21.    Col. iii. 13.    2 Thess. ii. 15.

*Evening.*

**The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as be of upright conversation.**

They turn the needy out of the way: the poor of the earth hid themselves together.

Remember this, and shew yourselves men; bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors.

O Lord, thou has seen my wrong; judge thou my cause.

Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

Ps. xxxvii. 14. Job xxiv. 4. Isa. xlv. 8. Lam. iii. 59. Ps. i. 5.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.**

And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then am I strong.

I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me; for I ought to have been commended of you.

1 Cor. i. 27. 2 Cor. xii. 7, 10, 11.

*Evening.*

**Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.**

Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud.

That ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.

For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office;

So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

Prov. xvi. 18, 19.      Rom. xii. 2, 3, 4, 5.

## WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**My soul followeth hard after thee: thy right hand upholdeth me.**

Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping.

Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O Lord; let thy loving-kindness and thy truth continually preserve me.

For innumerable evils have compassed me about; mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up: they are more than the hairs of mine head; therefore my heart faileth me.

Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me: O Lord, make haste to help me.

Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as love thy salvation say continually, The Lord be magnified.

Ps. vi. 3, 8.

Ps. xl. 11, 12, 13, 16.

*Evening.*

**I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.**

When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.

Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion:

And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.

Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

2 Cor. vi. 18.

Hos. xi. 1.

Jer. iii. 14, 15.

Gal. iv. 7.

**THURSDAY.**

*Morning.*

**Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me.**

Behold, thou hast made my days as an hand-breadth, and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity.

For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.

Thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are as a sleep: in the morning they are like grass which groweth up.

In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth.

Ps. cxxxix. 5.

Ps. xxxix. 5.

Ps. xc. 4, 5, 6.

*Evening.*

**For I will set mine eyes upon them for good, and I will bring them again to this land: and I will build them, and not pull them down; and I will plant them, and not pluck them up.**

Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak, and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth.

My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew; as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass.

For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.

Jer. xxiv. 6. Deut. xxxii. 1, 2, 9.

## FRIDAY.

### *Morning.*

**He that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.**

He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.

But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundred-fold, some sixty, some thirty.

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above.

But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

Gal.vi. 8. Matt. xiii. 22, 23. James i. 17, 22.

### *Evening.*

**The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.**

Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be; if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.

Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour; but for this cause came I unto this hour.

Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

John xii. 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins.**

Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends.



Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it; if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned.

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

Prov. x. 12. 1 Cor. xiii. 3. Prov. xvii. 9.  
Canticle (Song of Solomon). viii. 7. 1 John ii. 1.

*Evening.*

**But as touching brotherly love, ye need not that I should write unto you; for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.**

And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more.

Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.

See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves and to all men.

1 Thess. iv. 9, 10. 1 Thess. v. 14, 15.



# HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

## THIRTY-THIRD WEEK.

### MORNING WORSHIP.

OUR Father who art in heaven, from whom cometh every good and every perfect gift, we beseech Thee to grant unto us that gift which includes all others--even that Holy Spirit which Thou hast promised to give unto them that ask Thee; to lead them into the light, to make their hearts soft by contrition, to sanctify them wholly, and to fill them with that peace which passeth all understanding. May we enjoy the renewing of the inward man, day by day; that, growing up into Christ in all things, our light may so shine before men, that they may glorify our Father who is in heaven.  
*Amen.*

HYMN, or *Psalm*, xcii. 1-4.

LOVING kindness every morning,  
Faithful shelter every night,  
Light and peace life's path adorning  
Helpful guidance strong and right;

Ever to us, poor and needy,  
God his tender mercy shows,  
And with care, precise and speedy,  
All-sufficient grace bestows.

Trust to him, then, all your sorrows,  
Wait upon his blessed will;  
Leave to him the sad to-morrows,  
And to-day's demands fulfil.  
Rest upon him, never fearing;  
Christ thy Saviour lives to bless,  
And our need, his love endearing,  
But exalts our happiness.

#### DEUTERONOMY XXXII. 48-52.

AND the Lord spake unto Moses that self-same day, saying,  
49. Get thee up into this mountain Abarim, unto mount  
Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, that is over against  
Jericho, and behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto  
the children of Israel for a possession; 50. And die in the  
mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered unto thy  
people; as Aaron thy brother died in mount Hor, and was  
gathered unto his people: 51. Because ye trespassed against  
me among the children of Israel at the waters of

Meribah-Kadesh, in the wilderness of sin; because ye sanctified me not in the midst of the children of Israel. 52. Yet thou shalt see the land before thee; but thou shalt not go thither unto the land which I give the children of Israel.

## DEUTERONOMY XXXIV.

AND Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho; and the Lord shewed him all the land of Gilead, unto Dan. 2. And all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim, and Manaseh, and all the land of Judah, unto the utmost sea, 3. And the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm-trees, unto Zoar. 4. And the Lord said unto him, This is the land which I swear unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither. 5. So Moses, the servant of the Lord, died there, in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord, &c.

-----

## *Prayer.*

ALMIGHTY and most merciful God, in whom we live and move and have our being, in whose hand our breath is, and whose are all our ways; we desire to bless Thee for the repose of the past night, and to acknowledge Thy goodness in the gift of a new day. We laid ourselves down and slept; we have arisen because Thou makest us to dwell in safety. Our voice shalt Thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will we direct our prayer unto Thee, and will look up. This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it. Glory be to Thee for the holy and blessed memories of the day. On the first day of the week our Lord Jesus Christ, having died for our sins, rose from the dead, and brought life and immortality to light. Having overcome the sharpness of death, He opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. He ascended up on high, entered within the vail, appears in Thy presence for us, and can save to the uttermost all that come unto Thee by Him. We desire to approach the footstool of Thy feet by that new and living way which He hath consecrated for us by His most precious blood; that, accepted in the Beloved, we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help us in every time of need. May we be in the Spirit on the Lord's day. May we enter into thy house in the multitude of Thy mercies, and so may we

worship towards Thy holy temple. We are not worthy of this great privilege, for we have been disobedient and rebellious, and have grieved and offended Thy good and holy Spirit. But, acknowledging our manifold sins and iniquities, casting ourselves on Thy fatherly compassion, pleading the blood which cleanseth from all sin, and supplicating the help of Thy grace, we would look up to the place where thine honour dwelleth, feeling that Thy glory need not make us afraid. Proceeding from penitent and contrite hearts, may our prayer be set forth before Thee as incense; may the lifting up of our hands be as the morning and evening sacrifice of old. Grant unto each of us the blessedness of the man whose transgression is forgiven, and whose sin is covered. Strengthen within us every holy purpose, exalt and purify our desires and affections. May we this day be led into the green pastures and by the still waters, that our souls may be fed, and solaced, and refreshed. May we wait upon Thee without distraction; may the lessons of Holy Scripture come to us, not in word only, but in power; may prayer and song be acceptable to Thee, and strengthening to ourselves; and may the instructions of the preacher, accompanied by Thy rich and effectual blessing, prove to us stimulating, edifying and consolatory, and be productive of impressions on the conscience and the heart, which shall not be without practical results. We pray for all worshiping assemblies,

commending to Thee the household of faith spread  
throughout all the world. Grace be with all humble and holy  
souls, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ  
Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. May every  
member of this family, and all with whom we are connected  
by the ties of nature, or any of the relationships which  
connect man with man, share in the blessings of Thy church  
and kingdom, and so live, this and every day, as to be  
prepared for the inheritance of the saints in light. May we,  
and all whom we love, find a place at last in the general  
assembly and church of the first-born, and be permitted to  
share in the holy satisfactions and to take part in the pure  
and perfect worship, of the upper world. These and all  
other mercies we humbly beg in the name and for the sake  
of the Lord Jesus, to whom with Thee, O Father, and the  
Holy Ghost, be glory and honour, dominion and praise,  
world without end. *Amen.*

-----



## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

MERCIFUL God, who, in compassion to our ignorance and weakness, hast given unto us Thy holy word to be a light unto our feet and a lamp unto our path; we desire to bless Thee for its fulness and variety, its revelations of spiritual truth, its records of the experience of Thy saints of old, their penitential utterances, their expressions of hope and trust, their prayers and songs -- so that, learning, like them, to walk with Thee we may finally be brought to sit down with them in Thy heavenly kingdom. Grant, we beseech Thee, O Lord, that this great object for which all Holy Scripture was written, maybe fully realized in us, through the power of Thy Spirit accompanying the word; and this we ask in the name and for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm xxxvi 5-9.*

ETERNAL Light! Eternal Light,  
How pure the soul must be,  
When, placed within thy searching sight,  
It shrinks not, but with calm delight

Can live, and look on Thee!

The spirits that surround thy throne,  
May bear the burning bliss;  
But that is surely theirs alone,  
Since they have never, never, known  
A fallen world like this.

O! how shall I, whose native sphere  
Is dark, whose mind is dim,  
Before the Ineffable appear  
And on my naked spirit bear  
That uncreated beam?

There is a way for man to rise  
To that sublime abode;  
An offering and a sacrifice,  
A Holy Spirit's energies,  
An Advocate with God:

These, these prepare us for the sight  
Of Holiness above:  
The sons of ignorance and night  
May dwell in the eternal Light,  
Through the eternal Love!

## LUKE IX. 28-36.

AND it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter, and John, and James, and went up into a mountain to pray. 29. And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening. 30. And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias: 31. Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. 32. But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep; and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him. 33. And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said. 34. While he thus spake, there came a cloud and overshadowed them; and they feared as they entered into the cloud. 35. And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying This is my beloved Son; hear him. 36. And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone. And they kept it close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen.

## 2 Peter I. 16-18.

FOR we have not followed cunningly-devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty. 17. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. 18. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.

## SERMON XXXIII.

“THEN COMETH JESUS WITH THEM UNTO A PLACE CALLED GETHSEMANE, AND SAITH UNTO THE DISCIPLES, SIT YE HERE, WHILE I GO AND PRAY YONDER. AND HE TOOK WITH HIM PETER AND THE TWO SONS OF ZEBEDEE, AND BEGAN TO BE SORROWFUL AND VERY HEAVY. THEN SAITH HE UNTO THEM, MY SOUL IS EXCEEDING SORROWFUL, EVEN UNTO DEATH.”

-- Matt. xxvi. 36-38.

THE sufferings of Christ are as prominent an object in the New Testament, as anything concerning him. He is as

much spoken of for what he suffered, as for what he did; as much remembered for what he endured, as for what he taught. He was “a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.” Grief and he, if we may so speak, walked together as intimate associates, were united as inseparable friends. They were acquainted, not merely by “the hearing of the ear,” or as by a casual glance and distant recognition--a short and hasty interview, and, anon, separation and departure; there was close and constant intimacy--an intimacy that grew closer and closer, till the one, as it were merged in the other; till Jesus in a manner disappeared, being entirely hidden and overshadowed by grief. His self-possession seemed to forsake him, his calm greatness to be obscured and eclipsed. He, who had required of others so often and so strongly that they should bear the cross lay, when his own was in sight, prostrate on the earth -- convulsed, alarmed, and in tears -- utterly overwhelmed by his feelings, in a manner and to an extent that, at first sight, excites thoughts which it is hardly proper to express; as if what is recorded appeared to involve something that was pusillanimous, abject, and unworthy of himself.

The three great scenes in the life of the Lord, on which an earnest and thoughtful man will often dwell, are the wilderness, the Mount, and the Garden -- in other words, the temptation, the transfiguration, and the agony in Gethsemane. The cross, indeed, comes after all, and

concludes all; but that, properly understood, is included in the last. It is the close and the consummation of what begins in Gethsemane; in this respect, Calvary is but the continuance, or the summit, of the Mount of Olives.

The temptations of the wilderness strengthened and prepared the Christ for action. He came forth from the successful conflict “in the power of the Spirit,” and so spake and so acted that all men marvelled. Then, his glorious interview and familiar converse with Moses and Elias, the divine effulgence of the bright cloud, and the remembered tones of the paternal voice, cheered his spirit in the prospect of the “decease which he was to accomplish at Jerusalem.” He came down from the place of vision, and instantly set himself to proceed thither. Thither he came; and on the night on which he was betrayed, knowing that his hour was come, and that the things concerning him had an end, he went, as he was wont, to the Mount of Olives -- to a garden, whither he was accustomed to resort for converse and prayer with his disciples. To this sacred place, this favourite retreat, he came once more. The twelve were with him -- all but one, and that one “knew the place,” and was expected soon to be there too, though in company with such as would disturb its serenity and pollute its sacredness. The greater number of those who accompanied him Jesus left by themselves. Taking with him, into a more retired part of the garden, Peter and the two sons of Zebedee,

James and John, “he began to be sorrowful and very heavy.” Then commenced that mysterious eclipse of his holy, calm, and divine soul, which three out the four evangelists have described. This we propose to make the subject of our present meditation. In venturing to approach it, we desire and pray that we may be enabled to do so with that humility, reverence, and awe, which are so necessary when treading upon a spot so holy, and gazing upon a spectacle so mysterious. May we *feel*, where it may be impossible to reason; and adore, where we cannot comprehend.

I. The first thing to which we direct attention is *the intense severity of the suffering*, which now overwhelmed and oppressed the mind of Christ.

In noticing the indications of this, and indeed, in our remarks on the whole subject, we shall not confine ourselves to what is stated by any one of the evangelists, but shall collect and combine what is most observable in their separate accounts. These separate accounts are in perfect keeping and harmony with each other; at the same time, words and expressions are varied by the different writers, and some incidents and circumstances noticed by one that the others omit, only showing that that while they agree in substance because they describe a real occurrence, they are distinguished by that diversity of manner that

proves them to have borne distinct and independent testimonies. The extreme intenseness and severity of Christ's sufferings in the garden are indicated by several circumstances.

In the first place, it appears, that as soon as he had retired with the three disciples who were permitted to be near him, the internal conflict commenced, and a sudden change took place in his appearance. Matthew says, that "he began to be sorrowful and very heavy;" and Mark, varying the expression, uses, instead of the word "sorrowful," the phrase "sore amazed" -- "he was sore amazed and very heavy." The original terms are all singularly forcible; they are very inadequately rendered in our authorized version, and indeed hardly admit of being represented by any single words in our language. They imply, that he was utterly overwhelmed by irresistible dejection and anguish of mind; that he was struck through, as it were, by the most piercing and bitter sorrow; that he was astounded and alarmed, as if taken by surprise; astonished at the magnitude of the trial, and wondering at his own weakness before it. There was a complete prostration of the bodily powers -- a suspension or deprivation, so to speak, of nervous energy. He was "*very heavy*." Both Matthew and Mark record this. "Very heavy;" that is, he was so oppressed that it seemed to stupify him: he appeared as if incapable of rousing or



exerting his faculties or his faith; he was stunned as by a blow. His internal strength seemed to fail and forsake him, and he appeared in danger of passively yielding to the onset of sorrow, as if it were hopeless to bear up against it.

The next particular that shows the severity of his suffering, is the language in which he himself describes it:

“My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.”

“Exceeding sorrowful” -- the word signifies to be entirely surrounded by sorrow -- for grief to be pressing on the spirit on all sides, as the atmosphere presses on the body, or water on an object when immersed. Exceeding sorrowful, “*even unto death.*” It seemed to him -- if I durst so to express it -- it seemed to him as if his soul must die; as if his spirit was enduring a mortal pang; or, at least, as if the grief that consumed it must speedily terminate his bodily life. The distressing state of mental and physical exhaustion -- of utter helplessness, and, at first, of apparent self-abandonment, -- to which Christ was reduced, is depicted very forcibly in some of the psalms in which Messiah is undoubtedly the speaker. “I am a worm, and no man;” “I am poured out like water:” “My heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels:” “My strength is dried up: Thou hast brought me into the dust of death:” “I am consumed by the blow of thine hand.”

The next circumstance by which the crushing and agonizing nature of the Lord’s sufferings is indicated, may

be seen, I think, in his earnest appeal to his three friends -- "Tarry ye here, and watch with me." These words, in one aspect at least in which they may be viewed seem to betray an anxiety not to be left alone -- a sort of painful, restless dread lest the disciples should depart, or that he should not be able to find them, and fall back upon their sympathy, when he returned from the spot to which he was about to retire. And here, as appropriately as anywhere else, I may make the remark, that it is especially behoves us, in thinking and speaking of the sufferings of Messiah, to remember his *humanity*. The humanity of Christ is as much a truth, perhaps as great a truth, as his divinity. While, in some mysterious manner, the Messiah was "God manifest in the flesh," he was also truly and properly a man; he had a body and a soul, and was susceptible of the same pains and affections with ourselves. In fact, it was only his humanity that *could suffer*, and in that he was tried, in all points, even as we are; "learning obedience by the things that he suffered," and "through suffering being made perfect." His human affections, and the nature of his personal temperament as a man, seem to me to be indicated by the anxiety he expressed for his friends to tarry with him and watch. There are men so formed and constituted that they care nothing about, and feel no want of, the sympathy of others. They feel a strong personal independence, a sufficiency in themselves for anything they have to

accomplish or endure; to which the company or concurrence of others can add nothing, and which even their opposition and ridicule cannot diminish. There are other men, more distinguished by tenderness than strength, whose susceptibilities are acute and keen, tenderly alive to insult or friendship, and by whom the sympathies of friendship are greatly valued as a frequent source of consolation and vigour. This latter class are not incapable of acting alone. They can accomplish unaided labours, and endure solitary suffering, but they cannot do either from natural and constitutional inflexibility; they need, in order to it, to feel laid upon them the stern and strong necessity of *duty*; to be constantly kept up by this; and even then, to be without the company and concurrence, deprived of the sympathy, or exposed to the opposition of others, is exquisitely painful. To this latter class Jesus, considered as a man, belonged. As a man, his natural susceptibilities and feelings were acute and tender. I think it likely that there was something of elaborate fineness and perfection about his bodily structure, that not only rendered it singularly sensible to pain, but gave increased intensity to the feelings of his exquisitely soft and loving spirit. It is intimated that he was keenly sensible to “shame” and insult; he *felt* “reproach;” and he cung to the society and sympathy of his friends; they were endeared to him by “continuing with him in his temptations;” he especially and anxiously wished them to be

near when his sorrow was great upon him, and by this anxiety indicated its greatness. He knew, indeed, that the hour would come, and was very near, when they would be stricken and scattered, and would leave him alone; and though he felt he would still have the Father with him, so appalling were the first approaches of his agony, so fearful the alarm and agitation of his spirits, that he seemed to dread the solitary conflict, and besought the three to remain nigh: "*Tarry ye here, and watch with me.*"

The particulars next to be noticed, which further indicate the intenseness and severity of Christ's anguish of mind, are those connected with his supplications -- the object, frequency and manner of his prayer. His earnest, impassioned, and repeated request to the Father was, that *that* hour might pass from him. He "offered up his supplications with strong crying and tears." Again and again he returned to ask the same thing -- "if it were possible, that the cup might pass." The strength and vigour of the principle of obedience were displayed, indeed, at the same time, by his breathing the sentiment of filial submission to the Father's will, at the moment that he asked relief; but that relief he did ask, and asked it repeatedly, and asked it in a manner that showed the excruciating torture he endured. He kneeled down he fell on his face, he lay, as it were, helpless and prostrate on the ground; anon, he wrestled as in an "agony;" he appeared to

be in deadly conflict with some strong and mighty antagonist. It was approaching midnight; the air was cool, and the damp and thick dew was falling to the earth and moistening all things; but Jesus in his agony was as one heated in battle; sweat covered him, and that of no common or ordinary kind; it was like great drops of blood -- perhaps it was blood; clots of gore fell from him to the ground; the anguish of his spirit thus making itself visible on the body.

In the last place, "there appeared an angel from heaven strengthening him." But this shows to what a mysterious condition of weakness he was reduced. He needed to be strengthened, to be helped, perhaps, by the angel's arm to rise and stand upon his feet, and to be animated and cheered by the angel's suggestions, to admit the thoughts that would sustain his soul. Physically and mentally he was brought very low, and required to have his anguish assuaged, his courage recalled, and his frame supported, by one from heaven.

Putting together all the particulars that have thus been glanced at, it is impossible not to feel that we have set before us, in the Gethsemane-conflict of the Great Sufferer, and instance of mental distress, or soul-trouble, of the depth, magnitude, and intensity of which, it is utterly impossible for us adequately either to conceive or speak.

II. In the second place, it becomes us, with humility and awe, to inquire into the *nature and source* of this

extraordinary distress and anguish of spirit, which so overpowered and prostrated the Son of God.

The suffering of Christ in Gethsemane was not bodily pain; physically, he was in health and vigour, at the prime of life, and in the flower of his age. The torture of the cross was before him, with all the preliminary accumulations of woe; but we cannot think that the mere apprehension of these will sufficiently account for what he endured. His mind had long been familiar with the death that he was to die; and he knew, and had predicted, his speedy resurrection to a glorious life. Now, it seems impossible to imagine that an event, however painful, which was to be immediately succeeded by “fullness of joy,” could have thrown him into such mysterious agony of mind. In after times, martyrs, men and women, were called to suffer the most excruciating tortures, had to entertain the prospect, and undergo the infliction of death, in forms as lingering and dreadful as his, and which involved as great an aggregate of physical suffering; and they anticipated and endured it with cheerfulness, joy, magnanimity, rapture. If Jesus was merely a martyr for truth, and was about to seal his testimony with his blood, I would say it with reverence, but I would say it, that his example rather fails than otherwise at this point, and that his conduct was surpassed, in firmness and heroism, by other sufferers. These other sufferers, too, it is to be remembered, were on every

supposition far inferior to him in character, not sustaining so glorious an office, nor anticipating so great a reward. Some other cause must certainly be found for Christ's darkness and distress of mind, distinct from the mere apprehension of the cross.

The seat of his suffering was the *soul*. But then, it is again and again affirmed, that he was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinner;" that he was "without spot;" had no speck or stain of guilt upon his conscience, and could not be oppressed by any feeling of personal demerit. He had no frailty, no defect; he had never erred, in thought, word, or deed; he had no conscious deficiencies to oppress him, nothing to acknowledge and confess with shame, no necessity to pray for mercy, no iniquity to fill him with terror at the thought of God. In spite of this, however, "his soul was troubled," was "exceeding sorrowful even unto death" -- overpowered and beset with bitter anguish.

I know of no principle on which this mental suffering of a perfectly innocent and holy being can be rationally accounted for, except that which refers it to the fact of his being a sacrificial and propitiatory victim. "He bare our griefs, and carried our sorrows." "He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him." "It pleased the Lord to bruise him and to put him to grief: Jehovah laid on him the iniquity of us all." His mental sufferings were "the

travail of his soul” --the pangs and throes through which a guilty and dead world might be reborn, and rise again to the life of God. “He suffered, the just for the unjust;” “he was made sin for us, who knew no sin;” “he redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.” “By his stripes we are healed.”

The great doctrine of redemption by sacrifice--”God setting forth his Son as a propitiation through faith in his blood” -- appears to me to be passages of scripture. We are redeemed from the penalty and the power of sin “by the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.” It is quite possible, we think, to show, by very sufficient and satisfactory arguments, the consistency of the doctrine of atonement with right reason; and the necessity which there is, in the nature of things, and under the government of a holy God, for some positive ground for the exercise of mercy distinct from, and additional to, both the repentance of the sinner, and the paternal tenderness of the divine mind. That part of the subject, however, we entirely waive at present, and, taking the fact as we have stated it, that Christ suffered as a propitiatory victim, we ask, if any account can be given, on this ground, of the causes and the nature of this extraordinary mental agony and terror?

The scriptures, we think, seem to refer to three sources of this distress and anguish. There was some mysterious



conflict with the great adversary of God and man, from whose tyranny he came to redeem us. When discomfited in temptation, the devil, it is said, “departed from him for a season”; and in Gethsemane seems to have returned. It was then, as Christ himself expressed it, “the hour of the power of darkness.” I know nothing of the mode of the tempter’s approach, or of the nature of the hellish suggestions by which he disturbed the serenity of Jesus; I do not pretend to understand the possibility even of the thing itself: but that it *was*, the scripture just quoted seems to assert. Here, then, is one source of mental conflict. The subtlety and malice of the devil, --the combined forces of the bottomless pit -- were brought against him, and in some way, impossible to be explained, overwhelmed him with darkness, discomposed his spirit, and alarmed his soul by infamous temptations. Then it is also said, that it “pleased the Father to bruise him, and to put him to grief;” that “Jehovah made his soul an offering for sin;” that he called for the sword, and awoke it against the Shepherd, and pierced and smote him. There was some mysterious infliction direct from the hand of God, some wonderful withdrawal of his countenance and complacency, or at least of their sensible manifestation; fire descended from heaven to consume the sacrifice. Again I add, I can explain nothing; I think the fact rests clearly upon scriptural statements, but I can go little beyond its simple assertion:

that little, however, perhaps the next particular will lead us to suggest. It is said then, in the third place, that our iniquities were laid upon him, and that in some sense he bore the curse and penalty of transgression. I need hardly say, we reject the notion that he literally endured the punishment of sin. This would have been impossible, since that included actual *remorse*, and Christ could never feel that he was a sinner, though he was treated as if he were. Nor would it have consisted with the nature of the gospel and the display of mercy, since, the penalty literally exacted, mercy would be impossible, and the sinner might demand his release from justice. Still there was suffering in the mind of Christ, flowing into it from human guilt. His pure mind had such an apprehension of sin, such a view of all its vile and malignant properties -- its possible attributes and gigantic magnitude so rose and spread before him -- that he started as in amazement from the dreadful object, and trembled, and was terrified exceedingly. Sin was laid upon him, and it sank and crushed him, and, in some sense, its poison and bitterness entered into his soul. The conclusion to which I am led, I confess, is this -- that while, as I have said, I deem it impossible for Jesus to have endured that literal remorse which is the natural and direct punishment of sin, yet I do think, that his agony of mind was the *nearest to this* which it was possible for him to experience. He was so affected by the pressure of sin upon him on all sides, and

agitation of a burdened conscience and a wounded spirit. His mind was in a tempest when his agony was at its height; it wrought upon his frame till his sweat was blood; the arrows of God seemed to have entered into his soul; he had all the appearance of a sinner stricken for his sins. I again repeat, that this could not literally be the case; I only say that it was the nearest to it that the Christ could feel, or God inflict; and I see not that there is any more mystery in something of this nature being felt, than in the fact of a perfectly pure and spotless being suffering at all.

III. The third and last thing to which we direct attention, is *the conduct of Jesus under his mysterious trial*.

He was “sorrowful,” “amazed,” and “very heavy,” but he roused himself *to pray*: the action of his mind so wrought on him, that he seemed suddenly deprived of strength, but he fell prostrate on the ground *and prayed*; again and again he prayed, increasing in fervour, earnestness, and importunity. He prayed, though disappointed in the support and sympathy of his friends. Instead of watching with him, seeking if possible to soothe his mind and to mourn an anguish they could not share -- instead of this, they gave way to fatigue and sleep; and though repeatedly roused by their Lord’s reproof -- administered much more in sorrow than in anger -- again they neglected his request and admonition, and left him “to tread the wine-press alone.” He prayed anxiously for the

relief he sought, but always with submission to the Father's will. He asked it, *if it were possible*; he pleaded for it on the ground, that with God all things were possible. Being in an agony, he prayed "more earnestly." As his grief and sorrow increased upon him, he increased in the strength and fervour of his prayer; and yet, as he proceeded to repeat his request, the language of acquiescence became more absolute. At first he says, "If it be possible let this cup pass;" but afterwards he says, "If this cup may not pass, thy will be done" -- as if he felt what that will was, and meekly placed himself in harmony with it. We have reason to believe, however, that he did obtain, if not the thing he sought, that which was sufficient to supply its place. The apostle says, in the epistle to the Hebrews, "He offered up supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared," or, was heard in respect to the thing he feared. He was not literally delivered from death, nor from those deadly mental pangs, so much worse than the cross itself; but he *was* saved from sinking under them; he was strengthened by an angel sent to him from the Father, and was thus enabled to ear up till the darkness had passed away. It was similar, I imagine, to what is recorded of the apostle afterwards; he besought the Lord thrice that a certain evil might be removed; and he was at length answered, not by the removal of the evil, but by the promise

of grace and strength to sustain it. With this he was satisfied, and he felt that he had been heard, “in respect to the object of his fear;” for though he had not obtained the thing he sought, he had obtained a sufficient equivalent. The Great Sufferer, in the hour of his mighty anguish, wept and prayed for relief in his sorrow, and relief he had: for relief comes, whether the cup of sorrow be removed, or we have strength given us to drink it.

Having thus adverted to the severity and the sources of the Christ’s conflict and sufferings in Gethsemane, and to his spirit and deportment under them, it only remains to conclude the subject, by a very brief practical improvement. We should learn from it such things as the following: -- First, the evil of sin and the holiness of God. How fearful and bitter is moral transgression, when the innocent and immaculate Substitute of the guilty was affected as we have seen, by its pressure on his spirit! How intense must be the hostility of God against it, when, in order to the demonstration of that hostility, and for the purpose of displaying his righteousness in connection with the pardon of the penitent, “he spared not his own Son, but freely gave him up,” that he “might taste death for every man?” Again, we need not be surprised at the fearful agonies that are sometimes endured, from the deep sense of unpardoned sin. Happy will it be for every one of us at every return of recollected guilt, to cling to the hope provided for us in the

vicarious sufferings of the Christ of God. “The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin.” Pardon, in the gospel, is promised for a reason: that reason is the great redemptive act of the sacrifice of Messiah, which is to be confided in and pleaded by the contrite man. That reason never failed, and it never will, so long as there is a sinner to believe, and a God to hear. Again, let us dread to sin; if we sin let us not be surprised if we feel its bitterness: let us fear to fall into the hands of the just and holy One, but let us not despair of ultimate relief, since Christ died to facilitate the actings of His compassion and tenderness, “who retaineth not *His* anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy.” Again, in the trials and conflicts of the Christian life, in every season of suffering and sorrow, let us learn to imitate the example of Jesus. However we may value or desire, let us not depend, on the sympathy of others. Let us never forget, that in conflict with temptation, and in wrestling with God, we must of necessity act *alone*. Let us pray with fervour, importunity, repetition; if the surges rise and overwhelm the spirit, if, like the Lord, we have agony and anguish, let us learn to pray “the more earnestly” -- to pray, if needs be, with prostration and tears. The grace of Christ will never be denied to the sincere and sorrowful, though its manifestation may be delayed. He lives “a faithful and merciful high priest, in that, he himself having suffered being tempted, he knows how to succour them that are

tempted.” Imitating his example, and confiding in his mercy, succour and light will come at last. No Christian must ever expect to be without his Gethsemanes; but he that faints not, but continues to pray without ceasing, will always find, that there is no Gethsemane without its angel.”  
--THOMAS BINNEY, LL.D.

-----

## THE CHILDREN’S SERVICE.

### OF THE FAMILY IN BETHANY.

WHAT a sweet word is home! What a cold world this would be, if there were no homes in it! Those lands are best, where homes are most loved and held as of great price. It is very sad to think, that there are so many whose houses, for their want of all needful room, and other things, cannot be called homes. They are haunts, dens, holes, but not homes. It is sad, also, that many fine mansions with large rooms, and plenty of them grandly furnished, want the lives and the loves that make true homes. Sin has wrought these things. God meant it otherwise. He set men in families, and wished every family to have a happy home.

When the Lord Jesus Christ came to earth, he did not have a home to take him in, at first. He was born in a stable, and lay in a manger. Yet the things which, more than the house we stay in, make home were there in the cattle's stall. There were love, care and prayer. And after the visit to Bethlehem was over, and the flight into Egypt on account of the cruel wrath of Herod had been followed by return to Judea on Herod's death, the child Jesus was taken to a home. It was a humble one, but there was never another like it. The Son of God, growing in stature and wisdom, was there. It is a thing to be thought about, that nothing has been told us as to how he lived in that home, except that he was an obedient, wise child, loved by God and men. No one has told the story of Christ's childhood in details. The pretended gospels that try to tell it, prove themselves false and silly. I wonder if the Lord wished to keep that story hid, till he should tell it himself to the multitudes of little children, whom death should bring up to him in heaven from age to age. Be that as it may, surely it should be good for children living in their homes on earth, to think that once there was a child, living and growing like themselves under a roof in Nazareth, who was then the Word made flesh, and is now Lord of all.

But I have begun to speak about homes, because I have a story to tell about a pleasant, happy, home where Jesus sometimes visited, and all the persons in which loved him



very much, and were loved by him. There are two things told about the intercourse of Jesus with that home. The one is connected with a feast, the other with a funeral. I wish to tell them both. The first will not take a long time to speak about; and in this story I shall be able just to show you how the day of the feast came to be followed by a time of sorrow and gloom.

The home of the family I speak of was in a little village about two miles east of Jerusalem, called Bethany. The road from Jerusalem to the village went up and over the mount of Olives. Whether the family had always lived there, or had moved to it from some other place, I do not know, nor do I know how they first came to know and to love Jesus; all that I know is that they were there, that Jesus was dear to them, and that they were dear to Jesus. There were three of them -- two sisters and a brother. I can have little doubt that in some of the homes where this story in "The Home Preacher" will be read, there will be exactly the same number of young persons -- two sisters and a brother. As I write I can think of some families I have known and loved, with exactly that number. To such *threes* about the fireside, the memory of Bethany should be very sweet and dear. Let me say to them, Could you turn to John xi. , and read it with change of your own names for those of Martha, and Lazarus, thus, Now Jesus loved \_\_\_\_\_ and her sister, and \_\_\_\_\_? May it be so!

The house this family staid in is called Martha's. That seems to show that she was the eldest of the family. Some think she was a widow, having her brother and sister to stay with her after her husband's death. However that might be, the house was of some note in the village, and the sisters and brother were well known even in Jerusalem. So one day, when Christ was travelling with his disciples, and had come to Bethany, Martha made him welcome to her house, and he was pleased to go. Now Martha was a kind woman, and hospitable, perhaps a little proud of her nice way of receiving guests. Loving Christ therefore, as she did, she thought she must take a deal of care about the dinner. She would not leave the preparing and serving of it to the attendants, but bustled about herself, seeing to every thing, and getting quite cumbered about the many matters she had to attend to. I suppose she got rather warm with her tasks; at least, her spirit got rather heated and hasty. For while she was going to and fro, ordering this and doing that, she noticed that her sister, whose name was Mary, was quietly sitting at the Saviour's feet, hearing what he was saying. Mary was a thoughtful, reflecting person, liking to go deep into things; and Christ's words were so deep, and pure, and good, and wonderful, that she was delighted to listen to him, drinking in his heavenly wisdom. I daresay she had sometimes vexed her active sister before, when, perhaps, she was found in a corner poring over the

book of the law of the Lord, and trying to look forward into the grand days that the prophets said were to come. I think I hear her say, not unkindly, yet with a little impatience, I wonder at you, Mary, when there is so much to do? But on this occasion she should have recollected, that it was a rare and great opportunity for getting knowledge, and should have been willing to be herself the hand, while Mary was the ear. But she did not take her sister's sitting to hear and learn in that light and grew a little cross.

There was no harm in Martha wishing to treat Christ kindly, and to do well what she had to do; but she either was disappointed to find no notice taken of her labours, or was really feeling that she needed help to get everything done to her mind. But if she ever complained to her sister before, she did not do so this time. She went to Christ himself, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister has left me to serve alone! Tell her to come and help me. There was surely a little pride in her doings in that speech, and a little grudging of her sister's being at ease, while she was full of care.

That was Martha's mistake; she was full of care. She thought more about the dinner and serving it right, than she would have done, had she known her Lord better. I do not think she would have been indifferent about it, but she would not have been cumbered. She would have done her best about the table, but she would have thought more

about her heart. And while her sister was sitting at Christ's feet, she would have said, had she not been wrong in spirit for that time -- Mary understands the Master's words better than I do; I will ask her to tell me about what he says afterwards. Instead of that, she in a way complained both of her sister and her Lord.

What did Jesus say or do? He answered her complaint with very remarkable words. He said, Martha, Martha, repeating her name to show how interested he was in her, and how sorry he was that she should know him so ill as to speak in the way she did: Martha, Martha, he said, you are worrying yourself about getting me a great many things. Do you know that only one thing is absolutely necessary to give me a welcome, and that, without that, all other things would give no welcome to me? One thing is needful, were his exact words. His meaning was, I think, as I have stated. The open heart was needful to entertain him; nothing else was indispensable; all else, without that, was useless. Mary had given him that; and he would not send her away from his feet just now, nor ever take away from her the part she had made choice of. She should always be a learner at his feet.

I have no doubt the kind reproof did Martha good. Possibly, however, she felt a little sore afterwards about her sister being commended, while she was not praised. If so, I can see a reason why that which happened by and by was

sent by God. The love between the sisters may have cooled a little on Martha's side; so God sent to the two a common sorrow, to weld their hearts yet closer. The sorrow came, however, for wider and higher ends -- to show Christ's glory, and to teach the whole world. It was this: Lazarus fell sick, and at a time when the persecutions of the Jews had led Jesus to go away from the neighbourhood, and he could not be reached at once. If Martha had thought unkindly of Mary, or had not been quite pleased at what Christ said, all is forgotten or confessed and lamented now. Her sister and she are under a common grief, and they have a common Lord to whom they feel that they must appeal at once. So they sent a message to tell him that one he so loved was sick, and they watched over Lazarus together, with aching hearts. I think Martha would even now serve most, getting cordials and medicines for her sick brother, while Mary prayed more, and talked more with him about Israel's God, and the beloved Lord; but they had no jealousy of each other and loved and wept together. Next story will tell more.

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Where did Jesus' mother find a home after his death?

2. Do you know a passage where beasts are spoken of having a home?
3. When did two disciples go perplexed to their own home?
4. Where is the grave spoken of as man's home?
5. Where was the home of the child Jesus for many years?
6. Where do we read of Christ's going to a feast in a Pharisee's house?
7. When was the Son of God entertained by a hospitable matron, before he lived on the earth?
8. What other woman, of the same name, resembled Mary of Bethany in thoughtfulness?
9. Do you know any Old Testament text which pronounces blessings on those who take a posture like Mary's?
10. Can you find a text telling us where to cast our cares?
11. What other instances do you find of Jesus' tenderness and interest in naming the persons he speaks to?

ANSWERS to the foregoing questions may be found by turning to the following chapters: -- John xix.; 1 Sam. vi.; John xx.; Eccl. xii.; Matt. ii., or Luke iv.; Luke vii.; Gen. xviii.; Luke ii.; Pro. viii.; 1. Pet. v., or Ps. lv.; Matt. xvi., Luke xxii., John xiv., John xx., John xxi.

---

*Prayer.*

O GOD, we thank Thee for all the sweet joys of home; for the love of father and mother, and sister and brother. We pray that peace and holiness may always be in our homes, and that Thou wouldst bless all that dwell there. Bless our dear parents. Bless those whose earthly father or mother, or both, are no longer on earth; be Thou a father to them. Bless all endeavors to provide better homes for the poor, and give to rich and poor those dispositions and habits of life which make home happy. May Thy fear and Thy love bless human homes everywhere more and more. May all strife between brothers and sisters cease, and may the time soon come when all men shall so dwell together as to make the whole world like one happy home. So, O blessed Father, shall Thy children on earth be prepared for going home to Thyself in heaven, and dwelling with Thee always--a happy holy family wearing Thy name, and made like unto their Lord; to whom be glory for ever. *Amen.*

---

## EVENING WORSHIP.

LORD God Almighty, who art wonderful in counsel and excellent in working, we would recognize Thy hand, and adore Thy perfections, as seen in the things that are made. The heavens declare Thy glory, and the earth is full of Thy praise. But there is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding. Thou hast made us for Thyself; for Thyself have we been redeemed. We rejoice in Thy purposes of love and mercy, which have been ever of old; for the words of patriarchs and prophets, which prepared Thy way, that in the fulness of time Thou mightest be manifested in Thy Son, and through Him reconcile the world unto Thyself. Grant unto us, we beseech Thee, so to receive Christ Jesus the Lord, that we, being cleansed from our sins by His most precious blood, may imbibe His spirit and follow His example, be daily strengthened and comforted by His grace, and at length be permitted to enter into His joy. These and all other blessings we ask in that name which is above every name;



and to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, would ascribe praise and glory for ever. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* cxxi.

HOLY Father! When we praise  
With imperfect accents here;  
Ancient of eternal days,  
Lord of heaven, and earth, and air;  
Stooping from amid the blaze  
Of the flaming seraphim;  
Hear and help us, while we raise  
This our sabbath evening hymn.

We have trod thy temple, Lord;  
We have joined thy public praise;  
We have sought thy heavenly grace:  
All thy goodness we record;  
All our powers to Thee we bring;  
Let thy faithfulness afford,  
Now, the shadow of thy wing.

We have seen thy dying love,  
Jesus! Once for sinner slain:  
We would follow Thee above;  
We like Thee, would rise and reign.

Seasons of delight in Thee!  
Let thy presence, Holy Dove,  
Fit us for eternity.

LUKE III. 1-18.

NOW, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, 2. Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness. 3. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; 4. As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. 5. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; 6. And all flesh shall see the salvation of God. 7. Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8. Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance; and begin not to say within

yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. 9. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. 10. And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then? 11. He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise. 12. Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do? 13. And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you. 14. And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages. 15. And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not; 16. John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire; 17. Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable. 18. And many other things, in his exhortation, preached he unto the people.

## 1 Peter I. 1-11.

PETER, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, 2. Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied. 3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4. To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, 5. Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time: 6. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season (if need be) ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations; 7. That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ: 8. Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though

now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory: 9. Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. 10. Of which salvations the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: 11. Searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.

-----

*Prayer.*

WE come before Thee, O Lord, at the close of Thy holy sabbath, to offer unto Thee our evening sacrifice of prayer and praise; to give Thee thanks for the mercies of the day, and to commit ourselves for the night to Thy gracious protection. Glory be to Thee for the day of rest and worship, for the sacred hours which have passed over us, and for all we have enjoyed during their stay, of Christian fellowship, sympathy, and communion. A day in Thy courts is better than a thousand; we had rather be doorkeepers in the house of our God than dwell in the tents of wickedness. Often in the high services of Thy church has Thou put joy

and gladness into our hearts, more than the men of the world enjoy when their corn and their wine do most abound. Again hast Thou broken to us, by Thy ministers, Thy Spirit, and Thy word, the living and life-giving bread; we have eaten of the hidden manna; we have drunk of the the water from the spiritual rock; we have seen the King in His beauty, have beheld His stately steppings in the sanctuary, and have felt the warmth and sunlight of His love. May the sacred satisfactions of Thy house be as enduring as they are precious; may the influence of the sabbath go with us throughout all the week; may our worldly engagements be regulated and sanctified by religious faith, so that, in all places and at all times, whatever we do may be done in accordance with our sacred character as belonging to the royal priesthood of God. May no day and no duty be deemed by us common or unclean; but whether we eat or drink, buy or sell, rule or serve, may we do all to Thy glory; that all time may be hallowed by the spirit of worship, and all service become divine. Hearken, O Lord, to the common prayer in which we have joined this day, the public and uttered supplications of Thy people; and fulfil also, and graciously remember, the private and personal breathings of individual souls the desires secretly poured into Thine ear, or made known by groanings that could not be uttered. Forgive the formality, levity, and thoughtlessness which may have marked the behaviour of some this day, who

appeared to worship with Thy people, but whose hearts were without sympathy with them, and far from Thee. Have mercy on those who, though surrounded by the light, walk in darkness; who know not their spiritual destitution, and are unaffected by the sinfulness of sin; who are not conscious of that spiritual hunger and thirst which Thou hast promised to satisfy, for which Thou hast so richly provided in the gospel of Thy Son. O that all who hear of the common salvation might be partakers of its blessedness, and being brought into true and living fellowship with Thy church, might be filled with joy and peace in believing, and know by experience the happiness of conformity to the holy and acceptable and perfect will of God. Happy are they who, having fellowship one with another, and with Jesus Christ their loving Lord, find in the ordinances of His church that feast which He has provided for them that are His -- a feast of fat things and of wine on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, and of wine on the lees well refined. May the blessedness of waiting upon Thee be so felt by each of us, as often to prompt the exclamation, Lord, it is good to be here! Animated and refreshed by the duties and enjoyments of this holy day, rejoicing in Thy love and care, we would now gather ourselves together under the wing of Thy Fatherhood, and commit ourselves to Thee, that we may be preserved from the perils and dangers of this night. The day and the night, the light and the darkness, are alike

Thine. All our times are in Thy hand. We close our eyes under Thy sleepless guardianship; and when we awake we are still with Thee. So let our weeks and sabbaths be ever Thine -- the days of our years all loyally devoted to Thy service; so that when all means and ordinances, sabbaths and sacraments, all the things which are made for man, shall have ceased and determined, we may enter upon that higher life for which man was made, for which we have been redeemed, and towards, which we would ever be pressing, following the example of those who through faith and patience are inheriting the promises. Hear us, O Lord, in heaven, Thy dwelling place, fulfil all our prayers receive our praise, accept and bless us, for Jesus' sake. *Amen.*

-----



## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

*Morning.*

**But do thou for me, O God the Lord, for thy name's sake: because thy mercy is good, deliver thou me.**

I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me.

I am gone like the shadow when it declineth: I am tossed up and down as the locust.

My knees are weak through fasting; and my flesh faileth of fatness.

I became also a reproach unto them: when they looked upon me they shaked their heads.

Help me, O Lord my God: O save me according to thy mercy;

That they may know that this is thy hand.

Ps. cix. 21 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27.

*Evening.*

**I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications.**

Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.

The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow.

Then called I upon the name of the Lord: O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul.

Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful.

The Lord preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me.

Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.

Ps. cxvi. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

## **TUESDAY.**

*Morning.*

**Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty:**

He shall deliver thee in six troubles; yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee.

In famine he shall redeem thee from death; and in war from the power of the sword.

Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue;  
neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh.

And thou shalt know that thy tabernacle shall be in  
peace.

Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a  
shock of corn cometh in his season.

Job. v. 17, 19, 20, 21, 24, 26.

*Evening.*

**If ye suffer for righteousness; sake, happy are ye:**

For even hereunto were ye called; because Christ also  
suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow  
his steps.

Jesus said, He that taketh not his cross, and followeth  
after me, is not worthy of me.

He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth  
his life for my sake shall find it.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for  
righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your  
reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which  
were before you.

1. Pet. iii. 14. 1 Pet. ii. 21. Matt. x. 38, 39. Matt. v. 10, 12.

**WEDNESDAY.**

*Morning.*

**O remember not against us former iniquities: let thy tender mercies speedily prevent us: for we are brought very low.**

O that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat!

I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments.

I would know the words which he would answer me, and understand what he would say unto me.

Will he plead against me with his great power? No: but he would put strength in me.

Ps. lxxix. 8. Job xxiii. 3, 4, 5, 6.

*Evening.*

**Turn us, O God of our salvation, and cause thine anger toward us to cease.**

Wilt thou be angry with us for ever? wilt thou draw out thine anger to all generations?

Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee?

Shew us thy mercy, O Lord, and grant us thy salvation.

I will hear what God the Lord will speak; for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints,; but let them not turn again to folly.

Ps. lxxxv. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**Lord, how are they increased that trouble me! Many are they that rise up against me.**

Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God.

But thou, O Lord, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.

I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill.

I laid me down and slept; I awaked: for the Lord sustained me.

I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people that have set themselves against me round about.

Salvation belongeth unto the Lord: thy blessing is upon thy people.

Ps. iii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8.

*Evening.*

**Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.**

He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God; and I will write upon him my new name.

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

1 Cor. xvi. 13.      Rev. iii. 5, 12, 13.

## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.**

Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breast-plate of righteousness.

For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

For whatever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

Phil. iv. 1. Eph. vi. 14. 1 John v. 3, 4, 5.

*Evening.*

**The servant of the Lord must not strive: but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,**

In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering, and doctrine.

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine.

2 Tim. ii. 24, 25, 26. 2 Tim. iv. 2, 3.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time.**

Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.

A good man, out of the good treasure of the heart, bringeth forth good things: and an evil man, out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things.

But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

Col. iv. 5, 6.      Matt. xii. 35, 36, 37.

*Evening.*

**Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.**

For if the word spoken by angels were stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward;

How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?

For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

Choose you this day whom ye will serve.

Heb. ii. 1, 2, 3.      Matt. xvi. 26.      Josh. xxiv. 15.



# HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

## THIRTY-FOURTH WEEK.

### MORNING WORSHIP.

O GOD and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hast promised to give Thy Holy Spirit to them that ask in Thy Son's name, grant that the Holy Ghost may dwell in our hearts, and that we may really feel and experience his renewing grace. Sanctify us wholly in body, soul, and spirit. Break the power of our besetting sins from day to day, and make all sin hateful to us. Enable us to fight a good fight against the world, the flesh, and the devil, and, by the Spirit working in us, to get a complete victory. May we be kept continually from temptation, and give good proof that we are not Christians in name only, but in deed and truth. And finally, being led by Thy Spirit in the narrow way of life, may we be found living members of Christ in the day of His second coming, and meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. Grant this for thy dear Son Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* lxiii, 23-26.

A FEW more years shall roll,  
A few more seasons come;  
And we shall lie with them that rest,  
Asleep within the tomb.  
Then, O my Lord, prepare  
My soul for that great day;  
O wash me in thy precious blood,  
And take my sins away.

A few more struggles here,  
A few more partings o'er,  
A few more toils, a few more tears,  
And we shall weep no more.  
Then, O my Lord, prepare  
My soul for that blest day;  
O wash me in thy precious blood,  
And take my sins away.

A few more sabbaths here  
Shall cheer us on our way;  
And we shall reach the endless rest  
The eternal Sabbath-day.  
Then, O my Lord, prepare

My soul for that sweet day;  
O wash me in thy precious blood,  
And take my sins away.

'Tis but a little while,  
And He shall come again,  
Who died that we might live, who lives  
That we with Him may reign,  
Then, O my Lord, prepare  
My soul for that glad day;  
O wash me in thy precious blood  
And take my sins away.

### JOSHUA i. 1-8.

NOW, after the death of Moses, the servant of the Lord, it came to pass, that the Lord spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying, 2. Moses my servant is dead: now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel. 3. Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses. 4. From the wilderness and this Lebanon, even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the

Hittites, and unto the great sea, toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast. 5. There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee; I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. 6. Be strong, and of a good courage; for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land which I swear unto their fathers to give them. 7. Only be thou strong, and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. 8. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

### JOSHUA V. 13-15.

AND it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him, with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? 14. And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. And Joshua fell on

his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my Lord unto his servant? 15. And the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so.

-----

*Prayer.*

ALMIGHTY God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we desire to begin our day with Thee. We draw near to Thee in the name and through the mediation of Thy dear Son, our Redeemer. For His sake hear and answer our prayer.

We confess before Thee that we are weak and guilty sinners. If we said that we had not sinned we should only deceive ourselves, while we could not deceive Thee. But we have nothing to say for ourselves. By leaving undone the things we should do, and doing the things we should not do, we are daily sinning against Thee. We have nothing of our own to plead by way of excuse. We can only put Thee in remembrance of Thine own promises and cry, "God be merciful to us sinners."

We now desire to cast ourselves entirely on our Lord Jesus Christ for pardon, peace, and acceptance with Thee. We profess to-day that we have no hope but in the

redemption He has provided, and the atonement He made on the cross as the substitute and mediator of sinners. His work, not our work -- His righteousness, not our righteousness -- is the only hope of our souls. We plead His gracious promise that "whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life." For His name's sake hide Thy face from all our sins, and blot out all our iniquities. Wash us in that blood which cleanseth us from all sin. This we solemnly declare is all our confidence, that Christ hath suffered for our sins, the just for the unjust. In Him we believe; Lord, help Thou our unbelief. To Him we come by faith: do as Thou hast said, and cast us not out.

We ask furthermore for grace, as well as mercy. Send the Holy Ghost with power into our hearts. Give us daily that thing which by nature we have not, even a will to serve thee, and a thorough delight in Thy law. Work in us true repentance for all our sins. Sanctify us wholly in body, soul, and spirit, and bring every thought and faculty within us into conformity to the mind of Christ. May we find it a pleasant thing to walk in our Saviour's steps, and may Jesus be, not only our salvation, but our example.

Strengthen us each one for all the relations of life in which we are severally placed. Whether old or young, married or single, parents or children, masters or servants, may we strive to do our duty, and to glorify God where we are and as we are. By unfailing kindness and unselfishness,

by helpfulness and by brotherly-kindness, by meekness and gentleness, by patience and longsuffering, by diligence and faithfulness, by truthfulness and honesty, by good temper and by charity -- by all these graces may we strive to adorn our doctrine, and commend our Christian profession. We know that we are poor creatures at our best, and full of failings; but we remember that with Thee nothing is impossible. Strengthen us with Thy mighty power, and supply all our need. Make us holy and consistent in all manner of conversation.

To these our prayers for ourselves we now desire to add our supplications and intercessions for all estates of men. We are deeply sensible that all our prayers are defective and defiled, and in themselves are nothing worth. But we put Thee in remembrance of Thine own gracious commands to pray for one another, and in the name of Jesus we spread our poor petitions before Thee.

Bless our Queen, and all who rule over us; may they govern the nation well, and do nothing to make Thee angry with our land. Do Thou, who hast all hearts in Thy hands, put good designs into their minds, and give them courage and wisdom for their execution. Confound the devices of wicked men, and bring them to foolishness. Strengthen the hands of good men in high places, and may there never be wanting a supply of such men to rule us in Thy fear.

Bless the true church of Christ in every part of the world. May all its members shine as lights in their several dwellings, and be salt and leaven to all around them. Increase their numbers, their faithfulness, and zeal. Keep them from useless strife and unprofitable controversy, and stir them up continually to a close walk with God.

Bless all visible churches of Christ throughout the world, which hold the Head, and maintain the pure truth of the gospel. Bless Thy work continually in the congregations, and add yearly to the number of such as shall be saved. Give them Thy best gift, a continual supply of faithful ministers, who shall preach the truth, live the truth, and feed the flock of Christ with knowledge and understanding.

Bless all our relatives and friends. Give them all that which is really for their good in this world, and above all, give to every one of them Thy grace in their hearts. May we all be led by the same Spirit, washed in the same precious blood, walk in the same narrow way, and love the same blessed Bible. Though parted and separated by Thy providence, may we often meet in spirit at the same throne of grace, and at last be found together eternally in the same heavenly home.

Finally, we give Thee our heartfelt praises and thanksgivings for countless mercies, of which millions in the world know nothing. For national liberty and worldly



comforts, for an open Bible and a preached gospel, for the means of grace and the hope of glory, for all these things we bless Thy holy name. May our hearts every day be more full of praise.

And now hold us up in all our ways this day, and then we shall be safe. Keep us from the world, the flesh, and the devil. Strengthen us for every duty, comfort us in every trial, guide us in every difficulty; and grant all we ask for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

-----

## CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

**ALMIGHTY** God, who hast mercifully caused Thy holy scriptures to be written for our learning, grant us a will to read them regularly, and a heart to profit by what we read. Open our understandings by the Holy Ghost, that we may understand the great things of thy Bible. May it ever be the rule both of our doctrine and our practice. Cause its truths to dwell in us richly, and grant that by faith in the Saviour, of whom it testifies, we may at length have an abundant entrance into Thine eternal kingdom, for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

HYMN, or Psalm xliii. 3-5.

SPIRIT divine! Attend our prayer  
And make this house thy home;  
Descend with all thy gracious power,  
O come, great Spirit, come.

Come as the light,--to us reveal  
Our emptiness and woe;  
And lead us in those paths of life  
Where all the righteous go.

Come as the fire, and purge our hearts,  
Like sacrificial flame;  
Let our whole souls an offering be  
To our Redeemer's name.

Come as the dew, and sweetly bless  
This consecrated hour;  
May barren minds be taught to own  
Thy fertilizing power.

Come as the dove, and spread thy wings  
The wings of peaceful love;  
And let the church on earth become  
Blest as the church above.

## JOHN XXI. 1-19.

AFTER these things Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise shewed he himself. 2. There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples. 3. Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing. 4. But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore; but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. 5. Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No. 6. And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore; and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes. 7. Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now, when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him (for he was naked), and did cast himself into the sea. 8. And the other disciples came in a little ship for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits dragging the net with fishes. 9. As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid

thereon, and bread. 10. Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught. 11. Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken. 12. Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord. 13. Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise. 14. This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples after that he was risen from the dead. 15. So, when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. 16. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. 17. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep. 18. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. 19. This spake he, signifying by what death

he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.

## II. PETER I. 16-21.

FOR we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty. 17. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. 18. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. 19. We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: 20. Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. 21. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

-----

## SERMON XXXIV.

“AND PETER SAID, MAN, I KNOW NOT WHAT THOU SAYEST.  
AND IMMEDIATELY WHILE HE YET SPAKE,  
THE COCK CREW,” &c. -- Luke xxii. 60-62.

THESE verses form part of a well-known story in the New Testament. They describe the fall of the famous apostle St. Peter, when he thrice denied his Master.

It would be easy to draw from the passage a strong indirect argument for the credibility of the Christian religion. If that religion had been forged and concocted by imposters, they would never have left on record such a narrative as this. They would never have told us that one of its leading preachers made such a signal exhibition of weakness as Peter did on this occasion. The transparent honesty of the gospel writers is a powerful evidence in favour of Christianity.

For the present we must content ourselves with lessons of practical usefulness. He that desires to be a well-furnished Christian must first study Christ himself. But after studying Christ, let him study the character of Christians as they are painted in the New Testament. If he

would know what to expect in himself or others, what to watch against and what to avoid, let him ponder well such histories as that which is before us.

I. In the first place, we will consider Peter's *fall*.

It was a great fall. Here is a disciple who denied his Master three times over. It was not a slip of the tongue, but a wilful, thrice-repeated act. It was done with every possible aggravation, at a singularly critical moment, and with the accompaniment of cursing and swearing.

What a Master was this whom the disciple denied! Gracious, loving, merciful, patient, long-suffering, almighty, wise. For such an one as this some would even dare to die. There was no fault in the Master, and yet Peter three times denied him.

What a disciple was this who denied his Master! The very last man from whom such conduct might have been expected--a leader among the apostles; one who had been up and down Palestine with Christ for three years, a witness of all his miracles, a hearer of all his sermons--himself a preacher of his kingdom. Yet this is the man who three times denied Christ.

It was a fall *after great warnings*. Never perhaps was a man told so plainly of coming danger. The very day before, Jesus had said to him, "Before the cock crow thou shalt deny me thrice:" -- "Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired

to have you, that he may sift you as wheat.” He had been cautioned, admonished, and put on his guard, and yet within twenty-four hours Peter denies Christ.

It was a fall immediately *after great privileges*. Peter had just been at the Lord’s Supper. Such a communion never was before, and never can be again. Jesus himself had broken the bread, and given the cup. Apostles were the fellow-communicants. Peter had just heard the wonderful discourse recorded in the 14th, 15th, and 16th chapters of St. John. Promises, privileges, and abounding consolations, were still fresh and ringing in his ears. Yet only a few hours after, this highly favoured disciple actually denies Christ.

It was a fall which began *on a very slight temptation*. What made Peter so afraid? Why did he say, “I know him not?” Were Annas and Caiaphas questioning him? Was Pontius Pilate ordering him to be scourged? Were Roman soldiers crowning him with thorns? Was there apparent danger of his life being taken away?

Nothing of the kind! A single weak woman says, “This man also was with him.” It was a simple remark, and not a word more was said. But at once Peter the great apostle begins to fall, and falls lower and lower every moment, until he ends with cursing and swearing.

Now these things were written for our learning. Here is instruction which ought to come home to the heart of



every professing Christian. The thoughtless and worldly-minded may think little of the narrative, and see in it nothing for themselves. The thoughtful man, who desires to carry religion into daily life, will find in it abundant food for useful reflection.

Let us learn, then, what poor weak creatures the best Christians are. There is a mire of feebleness in our hearts, of which most of us have very faint and inadequate conceptions. There is no kind of sin into which the holiest child of God may not fall, unless he continually watches and prays to be held up. The biographies of the saints in God's word are stained with many a sorrowful blemish. We discover that there is no literal perfection in man, even when converted, renewed, and sanctified. We find that Noah could be drunken, Abraham could countenance a lie, Moses could speak unadvisedly with his lips, David could commit adultery, Solomon could fall into idolatry, and Paul and Barnabas could quarrel. And here we cap all to-day, by finding that even an apostle like Peter could deny Christ.

Let us learn to judge others charitably, and to expect little from any child of Adam. Above all, let us learn to walk humbly ourselves, to distrust our own goodness, and never to say of any sin, "I am incapable of doing that." We know nothing at all about the matter! We have not the least idea what we might do, if tempted in a moment of weakness and left to ourselves. The most unlikely people

sometimes do the most unlikely things. Let us rather throw ourselves daily on the Strong for strength, and cry, “Hold thou me up, and then I shall be safe.”

II. In the second place, we will consider the *steps* which led to Peter’s fall.

This is a point of infinite importance. It rarely happens that a true Christian falls into sin without a predisposing cause. When such a man backslides or is overtaken by a grievous fault, there are generally reasons which account for it. If the case is thoroughly investigated and brought to light, it will be found that the fall may be traced to secret evils of long standing. This principle is singularly illustrated in the history of the apostle Peter. Mischief had begun in his heart before he denied Christ. To the eyes of men his denial was the first appearance of failure. To the eye of God that failure had begun long before; the steps which preceded his fall are as clearly marked in Scripture as the steps of a ladder. Let us look at them, and see what they were.

One thing we may detect in Peter before he fell was *pride and self-conceit*. What did he first say when Jesus gave him warning of coming danger? “Though all men deny thee, yet will not I: I am ready to go with thee both to prison and to death.” Brave words these and confidently spoken! Yet, alas! These very words proved how little he knew his own heart.

He thought himself stronger than all his brethren. He felt no doubt of his own courage, strength, perseverance, and faithfulness. Others might run away; not he! Others might deny Christ; it was impossible he could! Truly this was a bad beginning. Never was there a truer saying than that of Solomon, "Pride goeth before destruction; and a haughty spirit before a fall." We know nothing till we know that we can do nothing of ourselves. The man truly taught of God will always say, with St. Paul, "When I am weak, then am I strong." Another thing we may detect in Peter before his fall was spiritual *sloth and indolence*. In the garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus took him aside with the sons of Zebedee during his mysterious agony, he specially charged him to watch and pray. He knew that trial of no ordinary kind was close at hand. He would have had him fitted and prepared to resist it. But what are we told Peter did? He slumbered and slept! He was sleeping when he ought to have been wide awake, idle when he ought to have been watching, careless when he ought to have been on his guard.

That was a fatal blow to his safety. No prayer, no power! Who can wonder that by and by, like Samson shorn of his locks, he found his strength departed from him. Means of grace are not saviours; but he that neglects means irreparably damages his soul. Let not that man wonder if, in the hour of temptation, his strength is small.

Another thing we may detect in Peter before his fall was indecision and irresolution. What did he do when the soldiers appeared, and laid hands on his Master to take him? At first he draws his sword, and smites valiantly with the carnal weapon. Then he takes to flight with his fellow disciples, and runs away. Then by and by he turns round, and follows his Lord afar off. Unhappy man! He cannot thoroughly make up his mind what to do. He does not completely forsake his Master, and yet he does not boldly join him. He does not manfully stand by his side, and yet he does not entirely go away. He halts between two opinions. He wishes to escape danger, and yet he does not like to turn his back on his Lord.

This was another downward step. Unstable as water, he was sure not to succeed. Like most people who try a similar line of conduct, he failed to satisfy either friends or foes, and only brought sorrow and trouble on his own soul.

Another thing we may detect in Peter before his fall was *willingness to be found in bad company*. What did he do when Jesus was taken to the palace of the high priest? He followed him there, and sneaked into the hall as if he had been one of the party that took our Lord. He sat by the fire, and warmed himself among his Master's enemies. He went where he had no business to go, and heard and saw what he had better neither have heard nor seen. Who can wonder that he caught harm, and did no good? It is far

easier to catch a chill, than to impart a glow. It is written, that “evil communications corrupt good manners.” When an apostle drops his character, and sits uncalled in the society of wicked men, it need surprise no one if he ends with cowardice, lying, and base denial of Christ.

Such were the four steps which led to Peter’s fall. They stand out on the face of the narrative of the historian, like beacons and danger signals. Wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, they deserve to be steadily pondered, and laid up in remembrance. If we love life and would see good days -- if we value a good conscience, and desire to adorn the doctrine we profess -- let us not forget the lesson which the steps to Peter’s fall were meant to convey.

Let us learn never to make light of little things in religion. A few isolated acts of inconsistency may seem trifling matters, at first sight. It is precisely the toleration of such acts that ought to be dreaded by every real Christian. Once allowed to dwell in our hearts undisturbed, these Canaanites will increase and multiply. It is the beginning of all spiritual mischief to say of one sin, “Is it not a little one? Why so particular?” Whatever we may please to think, there is nothing really little in religion. The tabernacle in the wilderness could never have been reared, and could never have stood with firmness when reared, if

the Levites had neglected little things, and left the pins behind when they marched from Mount Sinai.

The saying of a heathen writer on moral subjects is seldom far from the truth, “No one becomes bad suddenly.” A breach in a sea-wall embankment may generally be traced to some neglected crack, or to a flaw in workmanship of old date. The sudden fall of some mighty limb from an old oak tree, without previous symptoms of weakness, will generally be proved to have been caused by some decay at the heart, which no one had suspected. The sudden relapse of some eminent professor of religion may almost always be tracked home to such faults as pride, laziness, and keeping bad company, indulged, unsubdued, and unmortified. Let all who love their souls lay these things to heart. He that would not fall as Peter fell, must never forget the steps by which Peter reached the bottom.

III. In the last place, we will consider Peter’s *repentance*.

This is a part of the history which ought never to be overlooked. Many remember the apostle’s fall, but not his rising again. Thousands are very fond of pointing at David’s tremendous sin in the matter of the wife of Uriah, who find it convenient to forget David’s deep, soul-searching, life-long contrition.

Peter did fall sadly, but he also repented speedily and unmistakeably. Every step in the story of his repentance is

full of useful instruction. The stages of his rise ought to set us thinking, just as much as the stages of his fall.

Peter's repentance *began with two apparently trifling circumstances*. Each demands special notice.

"The cock crew." No doubt Peter had heard that sound thousands of times, and been utterly unmoved by it; but now the shrill cry of the bird rung in his ears like the voice of the archangel and the trump of God. It called him to remembrance; it awoke him from his slumbering condition, and made him see and feel what he was doing.

"The Lord turned and looked upon Peter." That look spoke volumes, and pierced the apostle's conscience like an arrow. It was a look of solemn pity and compassion, a reminding look, a warning look, a rebuking look. To Peter's heart there was more in that look than the eloquence of a thousand sermons.

A cock crowing and a look? What trifles they seem! Yet trifles like these are often the very things which begin a revolution in man's soul. The turning of a little valve is enough to let the steam in upon a steam-engine, and in a few moments the whole machinery of some mighty manufactory is throbbing and revolving with busy din and activity. A word, a sigh, a glance, a tear, a frown, a shake of the head, a letter, a tract -- any of these may be made the means in God's hand of touching the springs of a man's

conscience and setting it on work, and of turning upside down the whole course of his life.

Let us despise no means, however little, in trying to do good to souls. “Who hath despised the day of small things?” The weakest instrumentality may work wonders, if God commands success. The strongest agencies are useless if the grace of the Holy Ghost does not accompany them. There must be a turning point in the tide when it ceases to fall and begins to rise, and yet that turning point is almost imperceptible. There must be a beginning in the work of the Spirit, when he calls a backslider to repentance or a dead soul to life; and yet that beginning is often infinitesimally small.

Peter’s repentance was *carried forward by memory* awakening within him. “He remembered the word that Jesus had spoken,” and at once broke the chain which sin had cast around. At once came flashing on his mind the warnings he had received, the privileges he had enjoyed, the profession he had made, the astounding weakness and folly of which he had been guilty. Just as the latent image in the photographer’s glass flashes out into a picture when the developing liquid is poured over it, though an instant before it looked a dull vacancy, just so did Peter’s sin flash out before the eyes of his mind, when the Holy Ghost aroused his memory and set it working.



Memory is a mighty help to the salvation of souls. Hundreds of things are lying buried at this moment in the minds of careless Christians, of which there will be a resurrection one day. All that we say from the pulpit is not lost and forgotten because many hearers seem listless and inattentive. Once let the Holy Ghost begin to work in the heart of a sinner, and rouse his conscience to activity, and then we discover that he remembers many things which those around him thought he had clean forgotten.

Peter's repentance was *attended by bitter sorrow*. At once, we are told, he "went out and wept bitterly." Tradition says that, from that day forward till his death, he never heard a cock crow without shedding tears. Whether we like to believe this or not, we may well believe that he carried a smarting scar in his memory for the rest of his life. A wound may be healed thoroughly, and general health completely restored, and yet after a wound there is always a scar.

We may lay it down as an invariable rule, that sin always produces sorrow, sooner or later, in this life or in the life to come. He that sows wickedness is sure to reap bitter tears. None perhaps find out that so thoroughly as a backslider. It is written, "The backslider in heart shall be filled with his ways." None feel so acutely that they have "forsaken their own mercies." None learn to their own cost so thoroughly, that 'it is an evil and a bitter thing to forsake

God.” Those who point to David’s repentance, and fancy it is easy to continue sinning and repenting -- sinning and repenting to their last day -- understand neither what they say nor whereof they affirm. Let them read attentively the 32nd and 51st Psalms. If the experience of the writer of these psalms does not convince them that a pardoned penitent has bitter recollection of his sins, they must be blind to the meaning of words.

Last but not least, Peter’s repentance *was followed by abundant fruit* in his life and conduct.

From this time forth we find none of the twelve apostles so bold and so courageous as the apostle Peter. None spoke out so manfully on all occasions; none were so completely delivered from fear. This is the man who on the day of Pentecost charges home on the Jews their sin in crucifying Christ, and proclaims him openly as the promised Messiah. This is the man who witnesses before the council, “there is none other name given under heaven whereby we must be saved,” but that of Jesus. This very man who thrice denied his Lord, is the very man who gloried every where in confessing Christ. True repentance will always show itself in this way. It will not content itself with tears, and regrets, and bitter repinings over past unprofitableness. It will act, and move, and stir, and do. It will find work to be done for Christ, and opportunities for showing love to Christ. The burned child dreads the fire. The true penitent

loathes sin in every shape, and form, and description. Loved much, he loves much in return. Plucked at a mighty cost from the brink of destruction, he feels that he can never do too much for Him that delivered him.

Never let us give way to the vain notion that there is any true repentance when a man continues in sin. Hypocrites and false professors may flatter themselves that all is right because they feel much, talk much, write much, weep much, while they secretly cling to their sin. They are deceiving themselves, and will discover it too late in another world. The true child of God will hate the sins that he deplores, and forsake them. Like Peter, he will not only weep bitterly, but work heartily. This, and this only, is repentance unto salvation, not to be repented of.

And now what general lessons may we learn ere we turn away from this deeply interesting portion of Scripture?

Let us learn, for one thing, to *beware of presumption and self-confidence* in our religion. We think sometimes that we are not likely to give way to temptations by which others are overcome. We flatter ourselves that we are too old, too steady, too thoroughly settled, to be led away. Let us cast away such foolish thoughts, and allow them no place in our minds. We are never quite safe against falls till we get to heaven. In the meantime, let us be clothed with humility. Though not cast away, we may be cast down; though not given over to complete apostasy, we may be

given over to miserable errors and mistakes; though never altogether losing grace, we may lose all sense and enjoyment of grace. Let us remember Peter, and beware.

Let us learn, for another thing, *never to despair of God's mercy and Christ's forgiveness*. We may have fallen sadly, and left our first love. But yet there is hope in Jesus, and the precious blood that cleanseth from all sin. He that forgave Peter, and raised him from his fall, and received him once more as an apostle, is not changed. He still lives at the right hand of God, rich in mercy towards all who cast their souls on him, and able to heal all our backslidings. Let us remember Christ's mercy to Simon Peter, and not despair.

Let us learn, in the last place, never to turn our backs upon a brother Christian because he has fallen from his profession, and run into sin. It is not charitable, it is not Christ-like, to do so. Let us mark how Jesus dealt with Simon Peter, and do likewise. Happy is he who never forgets the lesson of the apostolic command, "If a brother be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness." -- J.C. RYLE.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

### HOW LIFE MET WITH DEATH, AND WHAT HAPPENED.

WHEN anybody is ill now-a-days, and it is wished to let friends at a distance know, there is the post to do it in a day, or a few hours; or there is the telegraph, to do it in almost a minute. When Martha and Mary saw their brother very ill, and wished to let Jesus know, they had to send a messenger. Perhaps he rode, perhaps he went afoot. In any case, surely he would go as fast as he could. He might have some inquiries to make as to where Jesus and his disciples were last seen; but when he found out, he would hasten to the place. And would you not think that as soon as Jesus heard that his friend was sick, he would at once turn back to go to him? But he did not do that. He stopped where he was for two days. He did not go farther away; but he did not return to Bethany. The reason was, that he wanted to let Lazarus die and be buried. That was not because he did not love him, but because he wished to show forth the glory of God in raising him from the dead. If he had been so pleased, he could have healed Lazarus where he was; as he did once cure a sick child, though he was miles away. But it was desirable for wise ends that he should die. Our Lord, however, seems to say that if he had been on the

spot, and had seen Mary and Martha weeping, and had heard them praying to him to save their brother, he could not have withstood them, and must have healed him. For after he was dead, Jesus said to his disciples, I am glad, for your sakes, that I was not there. So after the message, he staid still where he was for two days.

By this time Lazarus was dead. I do not know what the disciples thought of Christ's stopping so long where they happened to be when the message of the afflicted sisters reached him. But having heard him say, This sickness is not unto death, they did not think it strange that he did not return to Bethany. On the contrary, they expressed their wonder when, after the two days' delay, he said, Let us go back to Judea again. They knew that he had left on account of his enemies seeking to take his life, and they were surprized that he should venture to return where his foes could find him. So they said, Will you go where the Jews were seeking to stone you? But he told them he must go where he had work to do, and that he would be safe until his work was done; and then he said that his friend and theirs, about whose illness they had heard, had fallen asleep, and he must go to wake him. That made the disciples wonder still more. They thought that Jesus meant sleeping, as we sleep at night on our beds, and they felt that to be a good sign of the state of Lazarus; and they made the remark that if he was sleeping, he would get well. Jesus let them think

for a little, and then he said, Lazarus is dead. The disciples thought now that it was natural for Jesus to wish to go to Bethany, but they supposed it would be at the cost of his life. One of them put it plainly, saying, Let us go also, let us die with him. It was Thomas that said that; showing more love now than he showed faith afterwards, when he would not believe that his Lord has risen from the dead, unless he should see his wounds in hands and side. All the disciples this time agreed with Thomas Twin, as all of them afterwards were beforehand with him in believing that the Lord had risen. So they went back with Jesus to Judea and Bethany.

When our good Lord and his disciples came to the village, Lazarus had been laid in the grave for four days. Of course they could not come without its being known. So before he could visit the house of the bereaved sisters, it was said, He is coming. The sisters heard the report. They both thought it strange that he had not come sooner; but they both were glad to hear that he had come. One of them, however, had deeper thoughts than the other. So she sat still in the house, waiting till the Lord would come; afraid, I suppose, that he was not pleased, or trying to find out why he had not come when her sister and she had sent the message to him. Martha, the other and older sister, though she had been reproved by Christ for being too careful about serving him at dinner, went off at once when she heard that

he was coming, and met him on the road. Perhaps she went all the more readily because she had been reproved. I have seen children go closer to their father's or their mother's bosom after being corrected for a fault. Be that as it may, Martha went, while Mary staid. The one acted, while the other was thinking; but their hearts were on one idea, that if Jesus had been in Bethany when their brother was dying, he would have cured him. They were right in that thought, for Jesus said that he was glad he was not there, showing that if he had been there, he could not have let Lazarus die. Will you think about this? There is something very sweet about it. Jesus could have kept his friend from dying, so far as power goes, though he was far away; he could have let him die though present; yet he speaks as if he could not have stood by and seen him die. Does not this show how very truly Jesus was man?

When Martha got to where Jesus was, she spoke out at once the thought that was in her own and Mary's heart. She said, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. Then she went on to say, showing her faith, that even yet she was sure God would give him whatever he would ask. Jesus answered her by saying that her brother would rise again, but that was not enough for Martha. She said she knew that he would rise again at the last day, but almost hinted that she would like something more than that.



Jesus then prepared her mind for what he meant to do, by telling her that he himself then present was the resurrection and the life, and asking her if she believed this. Answering that she did -- that she believed Jesus to be the Son of God -- she went away home, and told her sister that Jesus was come, and wished to see her. That led Mary to rise at once and go to Jesus; and when she reached him, she fell at his feet weeping and said, just as her sister had done, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother would not have died. By this time a number of Jews, who had been trying to comfort the mourning sisters, had followed Mary from the house, and were gathering round where Jesus was standing. Jesus was very much moved when he saw Mary's tears, and the weeping of others round her. He said, Where have ye buried Lazarus? And they said, Come and see. On the way a wonderful thing happened. Tears began to course down the face of the Saviour. The verse which tell us this is the shortest in the Bible, and among the sweetest. I have no doubt you can repeat it. It says, "Jesus wept." When the Jews saw his tears, they said, How he must have loved him!

It was not long till the mourners reached the grave where, four days before, Lazarus had been laid. It was a cave, and a large stone lay at the mouth of it. Jessu bade them roll the stone away. When Martha heard this command, her faith seems to have failed her, for she made objection that the body would be decaying and very

unpleasant to sight and smell. Jesus put her objection aside, and said, did not I tell you to have faith, and you would see God's glory? After that the people rolled away the stone, and Jesus, looking up to heaven, gave thanks to his Father for having heard his prayer. He did this aloud, for the sake of the persons that were standing by. Then, raising his voice, he called to the dead man, Lazarus, come forth; and, in a moment, bound with graveclothes, just as he had lain in the cave, he came out. Jesus said, Loose him, and let him go. So they would no doubt unbind his hands and feet and face; and the two sisters, wondering and rejoicing, would lead him away home. Perhaps Jesus went with them, and explained to them his reasons for letting Lazarus die, that he might bring him to life again. The Bible, however, does not tell us anything more about the family at Bethany, til it gives an account of a supper that was given to Jesus and his disciples some days afterwards in their house. What happened at that supper will be told in another story.

-----

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Who was it that rode first to see a prophet of God, when sickness and death had happened in the home?

2. Whose child did Jesus cure while he was at a distance?
3. Do you remember an instance in which Jesus appeared not to attend to a person crying to him for a sick daughter?
4. Where is even a violent and cruel death spoken of as sleep?
5. Where do we read of the unbelief of Thomas?
6. Can you find two other confessions of Jesus as the Son of God, which it pleased him so much to hear?
7. On what two other occasions do we read of Christ weeping?
8. Who rolled away the stone from the door of Jesus' grave?

ANSWERS to the foregoing questions will be easily found by consulting the following chapters: -- 2 Kings iv.; John iv.; Matt. xv.; Acts vii.; John xx.; John i. and vi.; Luke xix. and Heb. v.; Matt. xxviii.

-----

*Prayer.*

O THOU who art the resurrection and the life, quicken our souls from the death of sin. May we all be risen with Thee, and live, even while on earth, a heavenly life. Give us, to

cheer us in dark hours, the knowledge of Thy sympathy and the hope of glory. Let us not be impatient under suffering and sorrow, and do not allow us to think that Thou art then forgetting us. We thank Thee for Thy tears beside the grave of Lazarus. Comfort Thou all mourners, and prepare them for that world where the days of mourning shall be ended. To Thee, Lord, be glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*

-----

## EVENING WORSHIP.

O HOLY Father, who has graciously sent into the world Thine eternal Son to die for our sins, and rise again for our justification, grant us fully to know Thee and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent. Give us daily a clear view of our own sinfulness and lost condition, and give us at the same time a clear view of the great salvation provided for us in Jesus Christ. Show us that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin, and that all who believe on Christ cleanseth from all sin, and that all who believe on Christ are justified and forgiven. Give to each of us that true faith in Jesus which alone brings peace to the conscience. May we live the life of faith

in Christ while we live, and be found in Christ when we die.  
*Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* l. 6-11.

COME, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,  
Let us thine influence prove;  
Source of the old prophetic fire,  
Fountain of life and love.

Open the hearts of all who hear,  
To make the Saviour room;  
Now let us find redemption near,  
Let faith by hearing come.

Thou art the only Comforter  
In all our souls' distress;  
Thou showest us our unbelief,  
And Christ's redeeming grace.

Arise and strengthen us, O Lord,  
Thou know'st we all are frail;  
Grant neither Satan, world, nor flesh  
May o'er Christ's flock prevail.

Cause all disharmony and strife

In Christendom to cease,  
And give to all the flocks of Christ  
Love, union, truth, and peace.  
LUKE IV. 16-32; 40-44.

AND he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath-day, and stood up for to read. 17. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias: and when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, 18. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor: he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised; 19. To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. 20. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. 21. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. 22. And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son? 23. And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country. 25. But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in

Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; 26. But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. 27. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian. 28. And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, 29. And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. 30. But he, passing through the midst of them, went his way, 31. And came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the sabbath-days. 32. And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power. 40. Now, when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them. 41. And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ, the Son of God. And he, rebuking them, suffered them not to speak: for they knew that he was Christ. 42. And when it was day, he departed, and went into a desert place; and the people sought him, and came unto him, and stayed with him, that he should not depart from them. 43. And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities

also: for therefore am I sent. 44. And he preached in the synagogues of Galilee.

-----

*Prayer.*

ALMIGHTY God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who dost keep us alive from morning to night, we desire to end our Sunday with Thee. Hear in heaven Thy dwelling place, and for the sake of Jesus, our mediator and advocate, accept our prayer.

We thank Thee for mercifully giving us one day in every week to remind us of Thee. We praise and adore that holy wisdom by which thou dost knock at the door of our hearts once in every seven days, and call to our recollection the concerns of another world. We confess with sorrow and shame that our souls cleave to the dust, and that the cares of this weary world are continually tempting us to forget Thee. We therefore bless and praise Thee for our Sundays. May we always know the value of this holy day, and never provoke Thee to take it from us by our national unbelief and hardness of heart. May we, each of us, use our Sundays well while we have them, and remember that they test and prove our meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light.



Forgive, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ, all that Thou hast seen amiss and wrong in us during the Sunday that is now passing away. Our best services are poor and defective, and mingled with imperfection. Our prayers and praises, our Bible readings and sermon-hearings, are all alike stained with shortcomings. If Thou wert to deal with us according to our dealings with Thee on Thine own day alone, we could not stand in Thy sight. Cold and sinful must our hearts be when, even in Thine own presence and on Sunday, we cannot love Thee more and serve Thee better.

But we desire to take comfort in thought that the Lord Jesus not only died for our sins, but ever liveth to make intercession for us; that we have a high priest at Thy right hand, who pleads our cause continually, and makes us acceptable before Thee. In Him we desire to rest every Sunday night, and on Him to repose all the weight of our souls. May our prayers be mingled with His all-prevailing intercessions: for then, and then alone, can we hope that they will be heard on high.

Grant that every Sunday may produce good effects on our souls. May the Holy Ghost make lasting impression on our hearts, and cause fruit to be seen in our lives. Show us more of the sinfulness of sin, the excellence of Christ, the folly of living for the world, the beauty and happiness of holiness. Wean us more and more from the world. Give us

clearer views of that unseen world which is eternal. Break the power of our besetting sins. Fit us more and more for relative duties. Make Bible-reading a more delightful occupation to us. Make our prayers more loving, more hearty and fervent. Increase our knowledge of divine things, brighten our hope, enlarge our charity, establish in us a deeper acquaintance with Christian doctrine and Christian practice. Thus mould and fashion our hearts on Thine own day, and make our Sundays become “days of the Son of Man” to our souls.

We pray for all Christian congregations which have met together this day in the name of the Lord Jesus. Revive Thy work among them. Touch many more hard hearts by the Holy Ghost, and convert many more sinners. Teach those to think, who now live thoughtlessly and carelessly. Lead onwards those who are now halting between two opinions, and give them courage to come out boldly, take up the cross, and follow Christ. Strengthen and build up all true believers, that they may grow in grace every week, shine as lights in the world, and do good in their day and generation.

We pray for all faithful ministers of Christ, who have been preaching thy truth to-day. Hold up their hands by Thy Holy Spirit, and cheer them in the heavy work which they have to do. Keep them from false doctrine of every kind, and specially from popery and infidelity. Preserve

them from inconsistency and unholiness of conduct, and grant they may not pull down by their lives what they preach with their lips. Supply them with all ministerial gifts suitable to their several positions, and let the word preached by them never be preached in vain.

We pray for all Christian schools which have assembled this day. Make them the honoured instruments of training thousands for the service of Christ. Bless those that teach and those that are taught. Let the seed sown in weakness in young hearts be watered by the dew of Thy Spirit, and grant that myriads of Christian men and women may one day have cause to praise thee for sabbath instruction.

We pray for all who are labouring to do good among heathens or Mahometans, Roman Catholics or Jews. Prosper every effort to spread pure and undefiled religion through the earth. Supply missionaries with all needful wisdom, faith, and patience; and gather out from among their hearers many more true and genuine converts. Incline the hearts of rich men to give liberally to the extension of Christ's cause in the earth, and let no evangelical movement, whether at home or abroad, languish or fail for want of supporters.

Finally, we pray Thee to hasten that blessed time when all men shall know Thee from the least to the greatest. Hasten that long-promised day when Christ shall come

again in person, take to himself His great power and reign, raise the dead saints, change the living, and gather all around him in one happy home. Hasten that happy season, when sin shall be cast out of the earth, the devil bound, and the curse removed -- when congregations shall no more break up, and sabbaths shall never end. And when that day comes, may we, and all whom we love, be found ready for it, and enter in with joy into the presence of our Lord. We ask all this for Jesus Chists sake. *Amen.*

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

#### *Morning.*

**He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment.**

The poor committeth himself unto thee; thou art the helper of the fatherless.

Some remove the land-marks: they violently take away flocks, and feed thereof;

They drive away the ass of the fatherless; they take the widow's ox for a pledge.

Remove not the old land-mark; and enter not into the fields of the fatherless;

For their Redeemer is mighty; he shall plead their cause with thee.

Deut. x. 18. Ps. x. 14. Job xxiv. 2, 3. Prov. xxii. 10, 11.

*Evening.*

**Love ye therefore the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.**

Also thou shalt not oppress a stranger: for ye know the heart of a stranger.

Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest; that thine ox and thine ass may rest, and the son of thy handmaid and the stranger may be refreshed.

And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against those that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the Lord of hosts.

I was a stranger, and ye took me in.

Deut. x. 19.    Exod. xxiii. 9, 12.    Mal. iii. 5.    Matt. xxv. 35.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**My brethren, have not the faith of our Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.**

For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment;

And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place;

and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool:

Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?

Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom?

James ii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

*Evening.*

**If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates, in thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother;**

But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth.

Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto.

Deut. 7, 8, 10.

**WEDNESDAY.**

*Morning.*

**If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail;**

Or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the  
fatherless hath not eaten thereof;

If I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any  
poor without covering;

If I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when  
I saw my help in the gate:

Then let mine arm fall from my shoulder-blade, and  
mine arm be broken from the bone.

For destruction from God was a terror to me, and by  
reason of his highness I could not endure.

Job xxxi. 16, 17, 19, 21, 22, 23.

*Evening.*

**For the poor shall never cease out of the land.**

The Lord killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down  
to the grave, and bringeth up.

The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth  
low, and lifteth up.

He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up  
the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes,  
and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars  
of the earth are the Lord's, and he hath set the world upon  
them.

He will keep the feet of his saints and the wicked shall  
be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail.

Deut. xv. 11. 1 Sam. ii. 6, 7, 8, 9.



## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast: but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.**

Therefore hath the Lord recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in his eye-sight.

With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright;

With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward.

For thou wilt save the afflicted people; but wilt bring down high looks.

For thou wilt light my candle; the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness.

Prov. xii. 10.      Ps. xviii. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28.

*Evening.*

**And in that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground.**

For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.

I know all the fowls of the mountains; and the wild beasts of the field are mine.

Lord, thou preservest man and beast.

How excellent is thy loving kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.

Hos. ii. 18.      Ps. l. 10, 11.      Ps. xxxvi. 6, 7.

## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn.**

Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk.

Thou shalt not see thy brother's ass or his ox fall down by the way, and hide thyself from them; thou shalt surely help him to lift them up again.

If a bird's nest chance to be before thee in the way in any tree, or on the ground, whether they be young ones or eggs, and the dam sitting upon the young or upon the eggs, thou shalt not take the dam with the young;

But thou shalt in any wise let the dam go, and take the young to thee; that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days.

Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together.

Deut. xxv. 4.    Exod. xxiii. 19.    Deut. xxii. 4, 6, 7, 10.

*Evening.*

**He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good: and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?**

Thou shalt not see thy brother's ox or his sheep go astray, and hide thyself from them; thou shalt in any case bring them again unto thy brother.

And six years thou shalt sow thy land, and shalt gather in the fruits thereof:

But the seventh year thou shalt let it rest and lie still, that the poor of thy people may eat: and what they leave, the beasts of the field shall eat. In like manner thou shalt deal with thy vineyard, and with thy oliveyard.

Mic. vi. 8. Deut. xxii. 1. Exod. xxiii. 10, 11.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**The poor is hated even of his own neighbour: but the rich hath many friends.**

He that despiseth his neighbour sinneth: but he that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he.

Do they not err that devise evil? but mercy and truth shall be to them that devise good.

He that followeth after righteousness and mercy findeth life, righteousness, and honour.

Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy ;  
break up your fallow ground; for it is time to seek the Lord,  
till he come and rain righteousness upon you.

Prov. xiv. 20, 21, 22.      Prov. xxi. 21.      Hos. x. 12.

*Evening.*

**The merciful man doeth good to his own soul: but he  
that is cruel troubleth his own flesh.**

The desire of the righteous is only good; but the  
expectation of the wicked is wrath.

There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there  
is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to  
poverty.

The liberal soul shall be made fat; and he that watereth  
shall be watered also himself.

He is ever merciful, and lendeth; and his seed is  
blessed.

Prov. xi. 17, 23, 24, 25.      Ps. xxxvii. 26.

# HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

## THIRTY-FIFTH WEEK.

### MORNING WORSHIP.

**M**OST gracious God, who hast given us the spirit of adoption, whereby we call Thee our Father, in the name of Thy Son we now entreat that our prayer may come up before Thee as incense. Grant that we, mortifying the deeds of the body, and being led by thy holy Spirit, may live as becomes Thy children, and joint heirs with Christ, who counted it his meat and his drink to do the will of his Father in heaven; that so we may finally be glorified together with Him, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* lxxvii. 16-20.

**G**OD moves in a mysterious way  
His wonders to perform;  
He plants his footsteps in the sea,  
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines  
Of never-failing skill,  
He treasures up his bright designs,  
And works his sovereign will.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take:  
The clouds ye so much dread  
Are big with mercy, and shall break  
In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,  
But trust him for his grace;  
Behind a frowning providence  
He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast,  
Unfolding every hour;  
The bud may have a bitter taste,  
But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,  
And scan his work in vain;  
God is his own interpreter,  
And he will make it plain.

## JUDGES VI. 11-23.

AND there came an angel of the Lord, and sat under an oak which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash the Abi-ezrite: and his son Gideon thrashed wheat by the wine-press, to hide it from the Midianites. 12. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him, and said unto him, The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour. 13. And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt? but now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites. 14. And the Lord looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee? 15. And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? Behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house. 16. And the Lord said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man.

17. And he said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, then shew me a sign that thou talkest with me. 18. Depart not hence, I pray thee, until I come unto thee, and bring forth my present, and set it before thee. And he said,

I will tarry until thou come again. 19. And Gideon went in, and made ready a kid, and unleavened cakes of an ephah of flour: the flesh he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot, and brought it out unto him under the oak, and presented it. 20. And the angel of God said unto him, Take the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and lay them upon this rock, and pour out the broth. And he did so, &c.

-----

*Prayer.*

O LORD, we come to Thee under a deep sense of our weakness, and proneness to stray from Thy paths, yet emboldened by the assurance Thou givest us, that Thy “strength is made perfect in weakness.” Yea, Thou hast taught us that “to them who have no might Thou increasest strength.” May we, therefore, deeply conscious of our utter helplessness, “have no confidence in the flesh,” but have ever in us an enlightened apprehension of the truth, and deem it worthy of all acceptation, that our sufficiency is of Thee. May we feel that we can neither renew our own parts, nor keep them when, through Thy grace, they are renewed, and that it is “not in man that walketh to direct his steps.” Yet, Lord, suffer us not to make our weakness



an excuse for sin, or to forget that Thy grace has left us without an excuse. Suffer us not to rest contented with endeavours to flee from that which is evil; but incline our hearts to cleave to that which is good, and to go on unto perfection. Thou hast said, “My grace is sufficient for thee.” Thou hast taught us that we have only to ask, that we may receive the Holy Spirit. Thy divine Son has condescended to reason with, and has said unto us, “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.” We beseech Thee, therefore, to grant us this gift: May the divine Spirit be imparted to us, to enlighten our understanding in the knowledge of the truth; to quicken knowledge of the truth; to quicken our souls, naturally dead in trespasses and sins; to save us by the washing of regeneration; and to guide, strengthen, and sustain us amid all the perplexities and difficulties and duties of life. Give us confidence in Thee, that Thy faithful promises shall assuredly be fulfilled to all who trust in Thee. Help us to take hold of Thee, and plead them with Thee; and may we find, in our happy experience, that they are “yea and amen in Christ Jesus.” May we ever have the spirit and habit of those who say, “We are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything, as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God.” Thus may we be enabled to use all the means of grace with which Thou hast so abundantly

blessed us -- not trusting in them, but finding them to be “wells of salvation” that yield abundantly the water of life to them who by faith seek for Jesus and his Spirit in them. “As new-born babes may we desire the sincere milk of the word that we may grow thereby. May we look for the fulfilment of the divine promise, and attain unto it, “that they who are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God, and shall bring forth fruit even to old age.: May Thy sanctuary be very dear to us, so that we shall be constrained to say, “This is none other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven.” May the sacraments be to us the seals of the everlasting covenant, rightly understood, and abundantly enjoyed. May the sabbath be our delight, holy unto the Lord, and honourable, so that we shall not think our own thoughts, nor find our own pleasure, nor speak our own words on it. Thus may we “grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,” to whom, with Thee and the Spirit of all grace, be glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

ALMIGHTY God, the fountain of all wisdom, who knowest our necessities, before we ask, and our ignorance in asking, we beseech Thee to have compassion upon our infirmities; and those things which for our unworthiness we dare not, and for our blindness we cannot ask, vouchsafe to give us, for the worthiness of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* xxii. 23-28.

HARK! the herald angels sing --  
“Glory to the new-born King!”  
Peace on earth and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconcil’d!”

Christ, by highest heav’n ador’d,  
Christ the everlasting Lord,  
Lowly lays his glory by;  
Born for men, for men to die.

Hail the heav’n-born Prince of Peace!  
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!  
Light, and life, and joy He brings,  
Ris’n with healing in his wings.

Let us then with angels sing,  
“Glory to the new-born King!”  
Peace on earth and mercy mild,

God and sinners reconcil'd!"

ISAIAH XL. 9-11, 16-31.

O ZION, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength: lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! 10. Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. 11. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young. 16. Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt-offering. 17. All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity. 18. To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him? 19. The workman melteth a graven image, and the goldsmith spreadeth it over with gold, and casteth silver chains. 20. He that is so impoverished that he hath no oblation chooseth a tree that will not rot: he seeketh unto him a cunning workman to prepare a graven image, that shall not be moved. 21. Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not

understood from the foundations of the earth? 22. It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in; 23. That bringeth the princes to nothing: he maketh the judges of the earth as vanity. 24. Yea, they shall not be planted; yea, they shall not be sown; yea, their stock shall not take root in the earth: and he shall also blow upon them, and they shall wither, and the whirlwind shall take them away as stubble. 25. To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. 26. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names, by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth. 27. Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God? 28. Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. 29. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. 30. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: 31. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

## SERMON XXXV.

“THOU WILT KEEP HIM IN PERFECT PEACE WHOSE MIND IS STAYED ON THEE: BECAUSE HE TRUSTETH IN THEE. TRUST YE IN THE LORD FOR EVER; FOR IN THE LORD JEHOVAH IS EVERLASTING STRENGTH.” Isaiah xxvi. 3, 4.

HERE is the secret of life -- peace, perfect peace, and the sure way of obtaining it. True, it ought not to be a secret, for it has been long published, recommended and even urged on the notice and acceptance of men. But, alas! they are generally blind to its excellence, insensible to its claims, and opposed to its counsels. Blessed be God, however, it stands as of old, unchanged and unchangeable. No neglect, or unworthiness, or abuse on the part of man, has caused it to be withdrawn. It still occupies its ancient place in the immutable word of the living and true God, and needs only to be accepted that its value may be proved. The stars in the heavens may be obscured by the mists that arise from the earth's surface; but although they are thus hidden from our view for a season, no change has passed over them, and they will be seen in all their glory when the intervening clouds are dispersed. So also the precious truths of the text may fail to be discerned by reason of the mists which

ignorance and unbelief and sin raise around us; but no sooner are these scattered by the light of the divine word and Spirit than the old and indestructible inscriptions are recognized on the firmament of revelation -- “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.”

In considering these words, we may notice -- 1, *The character contemplated* -- “whose mind is stayed on thee;” 2, *The blessing promised* -- Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace;” 3, *The duty enjoined* -- “trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.” It will be seen, as we proceed, that there is a close and instructive connection between these several views of the text.

1. The text contemplates a special case -- *the condition* of the man “whose mind is stayed” on God. The term employed is very forcible. It means the fixed thought of the mind, when it is set with such intensity of any object that it cannot be diverted from it. The idea is well described in the 112th Psalm, when it is said of the righteous man “he shall not be moved for ever; he shall not be afraid of evil tidings; his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord. His heart is established, he shall not be afraid.” The same sentiment is expressed by the apostle Paul when he says, The foundation

of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.”

In this condition of mind there is supposed to be a discovery of the vanity of all human confidence. Solomon has said, “He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool.” Its desires will lead him astray, its devices will prove to be folly, and its promises will end in disappointment. No more can we depend on anything we possess. “Riches make to themselves wings and fly away.” Nor is there any other creature on whom we can rely. Every one is as deceitful, evanescent, and unsatisfying as ourselves. The language of the Scriptures is singularly strong: “Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of? Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord.”

To have the “mind stayed” on God is to trust unhesitatingly in Him, in Him exclusively, but in Him universally. It is to meet all we learn of Him with a corresponding and becoming confidence. His perfections are apprehended as these are manifested in His Son Jesus Christ, and we commit ourselves to them. There is faith in God, and we betake ourselves to each perfection as it offers the needed refuge to the soul. Are we in perplexity? We know not what to do, for the way is equally dark and dangerous. The wisdom of God is then the open door by



which we must enter into his temple. Devoutly kneeling within its sacred precincts, we must seek its guidance, and cast ourselves on its direction. As we do so with confidence we honour God, and as we rest in the assurance that he will make our path plain, so may our mind be said to be stayed upon God. So also under a sense of weakness. Is there a deep sense of inability either to resist the temptations that beset us, or to discharge the duties that are required of us? This is a call to commit ourselves to the power of God. It was thus the apostle acted when he was conscious of being “buffeted by a messenger from Satan.” “For this thing,” he says, “I besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.” So that he concluded, “when I am weak then am I strong,” and showed that his “mind was stayed” on the power of God. Or are we in trouble, and do we feel ourselves sinking under the burden of it? A fine example is presented by Hezekiah when at such a time he said, “O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me.” His mind was stayed on the all-sufficiency of God. Is it a sense of guilt that distresses us? Our unworthiness and vileness stare us in the face, and we blush and are ashamed before both God and man. Even then there is an open door to the chamber of his mercy. We can read, “God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins,

hath quickened us together with Christ; by grace are ye saved.” As we embrace this truth our minds may well be stayed on the mercy of God. Even the justice of God may be pleaded by the sinner. It has been satisfied and magnified in Christ, and they who confide in Him honour it while they accept his satisfaction to it as the ground of their hope. His holiness, too, is a guarantee that all things shall be ordered for the highest and best interests of those who confide in Him; and his truth may be pleaded for the fulfilment of all the promises contained in his word. On any one of them may we lay the hand of faith and plead, “Do as thou hast said.” In short, God himself is the confidence of his people. We have named his perfections, but this is only to help our infirmities. We must guard against any reliance on any mere abstract perfections. It is on God himself we must depend. These are only the porches by which we enter into his presence and deal with Him. We are to say with David, “Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My heart and my flesh faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.” It is then the mind may be said to be stayed upon God. This is the case contemplated in the text, and we are now prepared to consider --

2. *The promised blessing* -- “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace.”

In the 17th chapter of Jeremiah, at the 7th verse, there are the following words: -- “Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is: For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of draught, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.” In this beautiful passage there is one sentiment in exact accordance with the term “keep” used in the text. They both suggest the idea of habitual and continued blessedness. They who are the subject of it are preserved in the enjoyment of it. The elements of peace are begun in the soul, and they are brought to maturity in the whole course of the future life. If it is interrupted, there must be the introduction of some opposing power. The promise is, “I will extend peace to her like a river,” both for abundance and permanence. It shall be continued as the habitual enjoyment of the mind that is stayed upon God. Both the means and source of so high a blessing, however, are pointedly noticed in the text, and it is important to observe them. As to the former -- the means -- if we are to be kept in peace, the mind must be kept stayed upon God. Peace will not continue to flow into the mind of its own accord. As food is habitually taken for the preservation of health, so the mind must be fed with living bread from day to day. If God is forgotten, or distrust of his perfections is admitted, or a doubt of his word, or disbelief

of his Son, or neglect or disobedience of his commandments, then peace is broken: the means of maintaining it have not been observed. This is the lamentation of God over an unfaithful people -- “O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves the sea.” In a word, the sentiment of the text is, that just as the mind is stayed upon God, in the same proportion, and no farther, can we expect to have peace. Then, in connection with the means of securing it, observe the view that is given of its author -- “Thou wilt keep him in peace.” It is ascribed to the immediate agency of God. Not only must peace begin from Him, but it must be maintained by Him. He is the author and finisher of this grace in the soul. The mind that would enjoy it must look to Him continually for it. It is the union of these two views that gives us a correct apprehension of the subject -- when we understand what are the means to be used and diligently employ them, and when we look over to God to render effectual. Then we adopt the counsel and imbibe the spirit of the command, “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”

When we thus act we may expect to realize the blessing that is promised, even “perfect peace” -- peace, of all kinds, in the highest degree, at all times, and under all circumstances. Thus may we enjoy peace in our own

minds, peace of conscience, peace with God. The mind, stayed upon Him as “God manifest in the flesh,” may say, “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” There is a sense of pardoned sin, an assurance of the divine favour, a persuasion of sufficient grace for every duty and emergency of life. Just as we trust in God and have the mind stayed upon Him, personally, so will be the permanent enjoyment of peace. And it is the same with all the disturbing causes of this peace from without as well as from within. A confidence in God himself and his perfections leads to similar confidence in his providence. We are enabled to trust Him under all the events that prove a trial to our faith. Are we afflicted in our families? Observe how David was sustained in such circumstances, while his mind was stayed upon God: “Although my house be not so with God, yet hath he made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure; for this is all my salvation and all my desire, although he make it not to grow.” Are we discouraged by the low state of religion and the difficulties and trials with which the church is called to contend? See David again, when, oppressed by such a contemplation in his day; lifting up his soul to God, he cried, “Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion. When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory.” Or are we alarmed and confounded by the events that are distracting and destroying the best

interests of society? We can call to mind how David sung at such time, “The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof. Clouds and darkness are round about him; righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne. Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.” Thus may we universally realize the promised blessing -- “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee.”

3. To this promise it is appropriately added, “because he trusteth in thee;” and this *reason* we shall now, in the third place, consider.

There is a fine sentiment and an encouraging truth suggested by the connection between this reason and the promise of the text. It is not merely that when we trust in God we are delivered from confiding in those vain confidences which deceive all who depend upon them, whether themselves or others of their fellow creatures. Nor is it merely that by trusting in God we commit ourselves to perfections which can never fail us -- unerring wisdom, almighty power, unbending justice, immaculate holiness, boundless mercy, and inviolable truth. All this there is, but there is more -- the grand thought is that by trusting in God we honour Him. And this is clearly the force of the argument in the text -- “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace

whose mind is stayed on thee, *because* he trusteth in thee.” Let this argument be now considered.

This is the deep and broad basis on which the gospel of Christ is laid. The heavenly host proclaimed, when Jesus was born, “Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace, good will to men,” And the apostle Paul has expressed the spirit and design of the whole economy -- negatively thus, “that no flesh should glory in his presence;” and positively, “that according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” Its high design is the honour of God, and we fall in with its purpose just as we give Him glory.

How shall this glory, then be rendered? There are many ways in which we may do so, -- in our hearts, by our lips, and our lives. But there is one element essential to every expression of the divine honour, and which is itself accounted the highest ascription of praise. This is confidence in God. The more we trust Him, the more we honour Him. As the spirit of distrust creeps in, we do Him dishonour, and act unworthily of Him. The strongest faith renders the greatest glory to God; and hence it is written of Abraham, “He was strong in faith, giving glory to God, being persuaded that *what he had promised he was able also to perform.*”

Nor was Abraham singular in this confidence. It is written in the 22nd Psalm, “Our fathers trusted in thee; they trusted, and thou didst deliver them. They cried unto

thee, and were delivered; they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.” So did Moses, when he said to Israel, as the Egyptians were behind them and the sea before them, “Stand still, and see the salvation of God.” So did Joshua, when he fell down on the discomfiture of Israel at Ai, and pleaded with God, “What wilt thou do unto thy great name?” So did Jehoshaphat, when beset by the children of Moab and Ammon, he called on Jehovah, and said, “O our God, wilt thou not judge them? For we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do; but our eyes are upon thee.” So did Hezekiah, when he went up to the house of the Lord and spread before Him the threatening and insulting letter of the proud Sennacherib. And so did the prophet Habbakuk when, in the prospect of famine, he confidently sung, “Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vine; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.” David did so when he went forth, a stripling with a sling and a stone, against the great Goliath who defied the armies of the living God. The apostles did so when, weak and helpless as they were, they set out on the high mission of subduing the world to Christ. All the worthies did so of whom Paul testifies -- “Out of weakness they were made strong, they



waxed valiant in fight, and turned to flight the armies of the alien.” Luther did so when he stood up boldly against the whole papal world. The missionary does so when he goes forth to seek the conversion of the heathen to Christ. All these have trusted in God, and by their confidence have honoured Him.

This, then, is the example for us. We are to remember what faith accomplished in others, and the reason of it -- that it honoured God, and was therefore honoured by Him. This is the force of the argument in the text, “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee.” And now, to complete the subject, it only remains to consider --

4. *The duty of cultivating trust in God* -- “Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.”

So long as the views which have been advanced are before the mind, and are allowed to influence it, trust in God seems to be an easy duty. The blessed revelations which the divine word gives of God himself, and the many examples which it records of confidence in Him, with the glorious results that followed, inspire the soul with the purpose of never distrusting Him. It is felt to be reasonable, if not irresistible, to yield to the appeal that is made to us; and we may say, with some measure of enthusiasm, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; for the Lord

Jehovah is my strength and my song; he is become my salvation.”

All this might be expected. Yet when we come to the realities of actual life a very different state of things is found to exist. Jesus had reason to say to his immediate followers, who had constant opportunities to witness his all-sufficiency, “Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?” They needed to pray, “Lord, increase our faith.” When the temptation of his arrest arose, even the courageous Peter denied Him, and all the rest of the disciples forsook Him and fled. This, alas! is too just a picture of the real condition of his professed followers in all ages. They lose sight of the perfections and promises of God. They forget the noble examples of other men and times. They yield to the suggestions of their own carnal mind, the temptations of a sinful world, and the allurements of Satan, and so become, like Samson shorn of his hair, weak as other men. The forms in which this weakness of faith appears are many, and we need to be on our guard against them that we may withstand them. It may be well to advert to some of them:--

There is sometimes darkness and desertion of mind. An example occurs in the 143rd Psalm -- “The enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath smitten my life down to the ground; he hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead. Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed

within me; my heart within me is desolate.” This sad condition of mind is ascribed to the agency of Satan; he is represented to produce it by blinding the mind against the perception of truth; and it issues in great dejection and unhappiness of spirit. Let it be remembered this is on record for our warning. We are subject to the same temptation. We may lose sight of God and cry with Job, “O that I knew where I might find him.” It is surely a solemn duty to guard against it, for it is alike dishonouring to God and distressing to us. The psalm that discloses it suggests also the remedy for it -- “I remember the days of old. I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the works of thy hands. I stretch forth my hands unto thee; my soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land.” Prayer and meditation, and active usefulness -- for it is added, “teach me to do thy will” -- are the means of deliverance. We should use these, saying “Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted in me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise him who is the health of my countenance and my God.”

Disappointments, again, strengthen these temptations to distrust. We are disappointed with ourselves, for we expected to make attainments which we have never reached. We are disappointed with others, for we looked for help where we have found a hinderance. And we are disappointed with measures which have proceeded from

both ourselves and others, which we had fondly expected to find efficient while they have proved unsatisfying, if not deceitful. Our hands thus hang down, and our graces are feeble. We are tempted to abandon in despair either the hope of a vigorous faith in ourselves or an extensive improvement in others.

Difficulties are superadded to disappointments. Some are real, and many imaginary. Together, they create a lion in the way. Then the temptation is to wait for better opportunities and other times. "The time is not come that the house of the Lord should be built." Our circumstances forbid, as we fancy, either that there should be great growth in ourselves or much usefulness abroad. And there is danger of falling into listlessness toward the one and unconcern for the other.

Against these and all similar temptations it is an urgent duty to cultivate trust in God. It is the neglect of doing so of which the prophet complains, saying, "There is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee." Here is the very duty -- to "call on the name of Jehovah," meditating on his divine perfections until we are inspired with confidence in them -- to "stir up ourselves to take hold of him," indulging every reflection that can awaken our minds, either by causing us to see the danger that urges us, or the encouragements that draw us to God. We should take hold of Him -- of his word, his promises, his

covenant, his attributes, himself. We should strive against unbelief and distrust, refreshing ourselves with such words as these -- "Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary. There is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." In the text itself there is great emphasis -- Trust ye in the *Lord* -- trust ye in the Lord *for ever* -- trust ye in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is *everlasting strength*." -- JAMES MORGAN, D.D.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

OF THE SUPPER MADE TO JESUS IN BETHANY,  
SOME DAYS BEFORE HIS DEATH.

HAVE you ever thought how wise the Bible is in not telling us about some things we might wish to hear of? Have you ever noticed that it does not speak of matters,

merely to answer curious questions? The silence of Scripture is often as wonderful as its speech. I dare say most little children would like to know something about Christ's life when he was seven, or eight, or ten years old. Now the New Testament does not say a word about it. I suppose we could not as yet understand the child-life of the Lord Jesus if it were told us. We shall need the light of heaven to read it by; here we should read it amiss. At all events, it has seemed meet to the Holy Spirit not to say more to us about Jesus, from the time that he was taken to Nazareth still an infant til he was twelve years of age, then what is contained in these beautiful but general words, "The child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him."

In the same way, it seems at first strange that not a word should be said in all the Bible about how the different persons that came back from the dead acted and spoke after they were raised. Did the little boy of the woman of Shunem remember that he had died on his mother's knees? or did he just feel as if he had slept and waked up? Did the man, whom the touch of Elisha's bones brought back to life, ever talk to his friends about where his soul had been? Was Jairus' little daughter able to answer any questions about the other world? Could Lazarus tell his sisters, Mary at least, something about the wonders of paradise? Or could he only say with Paul, that the things he saw and heard were

“unspeakable,” and not lawful for a man to utter?” or had he forgotten all about them? All these questions it is natural, but idle, to put. The Scripture, which alone could answer them for us, says nothing on the subject. When it has told us about the different resurrections recorded in its pages, it does not even allude to the raised persons any more, with one single exception. This is striking; but if you think a little about it, you will see that it is better as it is than otherwise. I think it likely, however, that if we could have seen and talked with the widow of Nain’s son, and all the others that lived on earth again after they were dead, they could have told us nothing more about the other world than the Bible tells us. To know more we must go there to see.

The one exception to entire silence about the persons raised from the dead, after their resurrection, is in the case of Lazarus. His name is four times mentioned afterwards in connection with the story I am about to tell: and we know from what is said about him that he still lived in Bethany with his sisters; that at a supper made to Jesus in the town he sat at the table with him; that many Jews came to see him; and that the chief priests had talk with each other about killing him, as well as Jesus, because numbers of the people were led through him to believe on the Saviour. All this, at the same time, is told us as it were by the way,

when John is giving account of what happened at the supper alluded to.

That supper was made, not in the house of Martha, but of Simon the leper. Jesus probably had cured him, and he was glad to give his house in honour of Jesus. Jesus, as man, needed food and lodging like others; and it was a great joy to those who loved him in Bethany, after Lazarus was given back to them from the grave, to ask Jesus to come with his disciples, and accept a feast at their hands. On this occasion, Martha would serve him, as before in her own house, with her own hands. But she was not cumbered now, nor did she complain of her sister's leaving all to her. The sisters understood each other better since they had been mourners together for the loss of their brother. Each has her own happy duty tonight, and rejoices in the service of the other. Meanwhile, both are glad to see Lazarus, their lost one found, among the guests; and often, I feel sure, must their eyes have passed from Jesus to their brother, every look at Lazarus leading them back again with fresh thankfulness and joy and love to their blessed Lord.

Mary's service that night was a strange one. I do not know that she told any one about it beforehand. Perhaps she mentioned to her sister and brother what she designed to do, and they were quite pleased. Even if she did, however, I hardly think they knew what she meant by it. For her thought was deep. This was what she did. She had



a large quantity of very sweet and costly ointment in the house, a whole pound; and she went and brought it all in a box of alabaster, and breaking the box, she poured it on the Saviour's person from head to feet. Then, like another whom Jesus had found and saved, she took the hair of her head and wiped the Lord's feet; while the house was filled with the sweet perfume. There was a sweeter odour than that of the ointment there; but only Jesus as yet perceived it.

When Mary poured out the sweet unguent without stint, the disciples saw her deed with wonder. One among them could not keep in a murmur. It was Judas, who was treasurer to Christ's little company, and had ere now helped himself to what was in the purse. He was a thief, and wickedly took away, for his own use, part of what was given by Christ's friends to support him and his disciples. Observe how sin grew in that bad, wretched man. He began by taking money from Christ's treasury, and ended in taking thirty pieces of silver for his Master's life. On the present occasion he was very angry to see what he called "this waste." He pretended that it was for the sake of the poor he protested against it. He said that the spikenard was worth more than three hundred pence, and how many poor people would such a sum have helped! All the while his heart's thought was, If I could have got hold of that money for the bag, what a fine sum I would have made out of it!

What he said, however, was about the poor, and had a sound of sense and charity in it. So some of the other disciples joined with Judas, sincerely thinking that the ointment was not wisely used, in being all poured out on their Lord's feet. They came to think very differently afterwards.

Jesus saw into Mary's heart. He knew that this was from her a farewell gift. She will mind the poor afterwards, her Lord must be thought of now. For she had come to understand that he was about to die. What his disciples stumbled at, she had been taught to receive. She believed his own word, and saw that he who raised her brother from death, was himself to be dragged to death. Whether her faith went further than this, and saw him rise again from the dead, I know not; only we do not read of her joining the other women in preparing spices to anoint his dead body, or going with them to the sepulchre. Christ's own words show that, at least, she knew better than all the rest that the Lord's hour was come. He answered the murmur of the disciples by telling them that Mary had kept this to anoint his body beforehand to the burying. It was a last service; could its costliness be grudged? The poor, he said, ye have with you always, but me ye have not always. And then he commended Mary's action in a very marked and wonderful way. He said that wherever the gospel should be preached throughout the whole world, this story would be told to her

honour. Christ's word in this has come to pass. The story is told by three of the evangelists, and is read wherever the gospel is known. His word shows that there was more to be commended, than the mere liberality and love that did not spare so costly a gift. Christ commended her clear-eyed faith, which took in what he had taught about his coming sufferings and death, even when his own disciples refused to understand its meaning. See what grew from Mary's faith and love! Mary filled the house with the odour of her gift; he has filled the world with it.

Dear young readers, have you any fragrant ointment for the Lord? Broken hearts are better still than broken alabaster. Repentance, faith, love, are better than costliest spikenard. Can you bring to Jesus broken, lowly hearts? Can you offer him trust and love? He will value them more than angels' songs. You can give him the very perfection of praise. Come, then, with your offerings, little hearts, loving, lowly, longing? Mary's ointment filled the room with sweetness; yours will send fragrance past the stars, in and before the throne of God itself.

-----

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Do you remember a curious question put once to Christ, which he answered with a word of practical advice, putting the inquiry aside?
2. Of what growing child in the Old Testament are words spoken somewhat similar to those spoken of Jesus in the New?
3. What prophet, besides Elisha, is recorded in the Old Testament to have raised the dead?
4. What place does Paul say he once was caught up into, as well as paradise?
5. Which of the evangelists tells us about the other woman that wiped Christ's feet with her hair, and who was she?
6. Can you find two texts, one in the Old, another in the New Testament, which shows that God regards what is given to the poor as given to himself?
7. How could you prove that even Peter and James and John did not believe what Christ said beforehand about his death?
8. Can you find two texts, showing that God takes delight in hearts that are humble and sorry for sin?
9. Can you find a text where gifts to Christ are said to have a sweet smell?
10. Can you find a text where Christ's sacrifice is said to be very sweetly fragrant?

11. Is there any text in the Old Testament where God is said to have found a sweet smell in the oblation of animals?

12. Where are the prayers of God's people called odours?

ANSWERS to the foregoing questions will be found easily by turning to the following chapters: -- Luke xiii.; 1 Sam. ii. and iii.; 1 Kings xvii.; 2 Cor. xii.; Luke vii.; Prov. xix. and Matt. xxv.; Mark ix.; Ps. li. and Isa. lxvi.; Phil iv.; Eph. v.; Gen. viii.; Rev. v.

-----

### *Prayer.*

O THOU who givest us life, breath, and all things, when Thou art pleased to ask gifts from us for Thy cause on earth, move our hearts to give freely and joyously. Help us to remember the poor, whom Thou countest specially Thine own. May we pity them, and be ever ready to help them. May we have grace to offer Thee, what is better than all outward gifts, the heart of love. May we be sorry for sin, meek and lowly in Thy sight, seeking Thyself above all things. O how shall we thank Thee for Jesus' death and Jesus' resurrection! May we now give our heart to the risen Lord, and seek to be guided by Him; and when His people

feast with Him anew in His Father's house above, may we be among the happy guests. All we ask is in the Lord's name; to whom be glory for ever. *Amen.*

-----

## EVENING WORSHIP.

ASSIST us mercifully, O Lord, in these our supplications and prayers, and dispose the way of Thy servants towards the attainment of everlasting salvation, that among all the changes and chances of this mortal life they may ever be defended by Thy most gracious and ready help, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* xvi. 7-11

BLEST be the everlasting God,  
The Father of our Lord;  
Be his abounding mercy praised,  
His majesty adored.

When from the dead He raised his Son,  
And called Him to the sky,  
He gave our souls a lively hope

That they should never die.

What though our inbred sins require  
Our flesh to see the dust;  
Yet as the Lord our Saviour rose,  
So all his followers must.  
There's an inheritance divine  
Reserved against that day;  
'Tis uncorrupted, undefiled,  
And cannot fade away.

Saints by the power of God are kept  
Til the salvation come;  
We walk by faith as strangers here  
Till Christ shall call us home.

#### MATTHEW VII. 21-27.

NOT every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23. And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work

iniquity. 24. Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock. And when the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. 26. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand; 27. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

#### MATTHEW XXV. 31-46.

WHEN the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory. 32. And before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: 33. And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. 34. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, &c.

-----



## *Prayer.*

O LORD, at the close of another day, we would, in the name of Jesus, make our prayer to Thee. How good art Thou in permitting us to begin the day, and to end it, with Thee. All the blessings we have enjoyed upon it come from Thy bountiful hand, and to Thee we give the glory.

Wherein we have been restrained from sin, or have been enabled to serve Thee with fidelity, or to participate in the enjoyments of Thy favour and service, we render Thee the praise. Wherein we have been led astray, or have proved unfaithful, or neglectful, or sinful, we crave Thy pardoning mercy. Enable us to return to “the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness,” and wash therein afresh. Thanks be to Thee that “the blood of Jesus Christ, Thy Son, cleanseth us from all sin;” that this fountain is always open, and always full, and always effectual. May we know at once how necessary it is, and how sufficient for our cleansing. Help us to wait ever by it, as the poor and afflicted ones at Bethesda’s pool, knowing that the Angel of the Covenant will surely and constantly come and trouble its waters, and believing that whosoever steppeth in shall be made whole of whatsoever disease he may have. So may we be ever clean in Thy sight, O Lord. And as time hastens on may we feel

increasingly the necessity of leading “a life of faith upon the Son of God.” May we be sensible that, every day, we are drawing nearer to death and the judgment. May we be enabled to appropriate the blessed truth, that “there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit;” and to cherish the thought of union with Christ as our only security for present and eternal salvation. And grant, that satisfied with this hope, we may ever walk worthy of it, living in the Spirit, walking in the Spirit, and led by the Spirit, thus perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord, and cleansing ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the mind. May our personal piety increase, and our relative holiness abound, and our public usefulness grow according to our opportunity; sensible that the time is short, and that we must soon stand before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one of us may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. With these solemn impressions, suffer us not to be entangled with the things of time, or burdened with its cares, or hardened by its occupations and temptations. May we live as those who feel they are mortal, and yet immortal. May our weak and perishing bodies keep us mindful of our mortality, and may the aspirations of our souls keep us alive to a constant sense of our immortality. May we be ever conscious that we are sailing on the sea of life, in a brittle

bark that is receding more and more from the shores of time and the landmarks of earth, and approaching nearer and nearer to eternity and its solemn issues in unending happiness or hopeless misery. Help us in our earthly and dangerous voyage to cast out the anchor of hope, and may that keep us sure and steadfast, entering within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, “made an high priest for ever.” Enable us to “give all diligence, adding to our faith virtue, and knowledge, and temperance, and patience, and godliness, and brotherly kindness, and charity;” and so may an abundant entrance be ministered unto us into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

#### *Morning.*

**Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.**

There is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord.

In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.

Therefore am I troubled at his presence: when I consider, I am afraid of him.

In thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee.

Prov. iii. 5.    Prov. xxi. 30.    Job xii.    10. Job xxiii. 15.    Ps. cxliii. 8.

#### *Evening.*

**Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.**

And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us.

And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

Heb. iv. 16.      1 John v. 14, 15.

## **TUESDAY.**

*Morning.*

**Therefore also now, saith the Lord, Turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning;**

And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.

For this is as the waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.

Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men.

The righteous shall see it, and rejoice.

Joel ii. 12, 13.      Isa. liv. 9.      Ps. cvii. 31, 42.

*Evening.*

**Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.**

And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer.

The Lord hath heard my supplication; the Lord will receive my prayer.

James v. 11.    2 Cor. xii. 9.    Ps. iv. 1.    Ps. vi. 9.

## WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High:**

To shew forth thy loving-kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night,

Upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltery; upon the harp with a solemn sound.

For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work; I will triumph in the works of thy hands.

O Lord, how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep.

I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvellous works.

That I may shew forth all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion: I will rejoice in thy salvation.

Ps. xcii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.      Ps. ix. 1, 14.

*Evening.*

**I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain: yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God.**

And now, saith the Lord that formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him, Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength.

And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.

Isa. xlix. 4, 5, 6.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**Mine eyes fail with looking upward: O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me.**

What shall I say? He hath both spoken unto me, and himself hath done it: I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul.

O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit: so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live.

Behold, for peace I had great bitterness; but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption for thou has cast all my sins behind thy back.

The Lord was ready to save me: therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the Lord.

Isa. xxxviii. 14, 15, 16, 17. 20.

*Evening.*

**Thou shalt call me, My father; and shalt not turn away from me.**

Surely as a wife treacherously departeth from her husband, so have ye dealt treacherously with me, O house of Israel, saith the Lord.

A voice was heard upon the high places, weeping and supplications of the children of Israel: for they have



perverted their way, and they have forgotten the Lord their God.

Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings. Behold, we come unto thee; for thou art the Lord our God.

Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains: truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel.

If thou wilt return, O Israel, saith the Lord, return unto me.

Jer. iii. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23. Jer. iv. 1.

## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the Lord; because they called thee an Outcast, saying, This is Zion whom no man seeketh after.**

Behold, I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents, and have mercy on his dwelling-places

And out of them shall proceed thanksgiving, and the voice of them that make merry;: and I will multiply them, and they shall not be few; I will also glorify them, and they shall not be small.

Jer. xxx. 17, 18, 19.

*Evening.*

**I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.**

They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will lead them; I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble; for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-born.

Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, he that scattereth Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock.

Jer. xxxi. 3, 9, 10.

## **SATURDAY.**

*Morning.*

**And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:**

And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit.

And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke.

The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come.

Joel ii. 28, 29, 30, 31.

*Evening.*

**For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem,**

I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people, and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations and parted my land.

But the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel.

So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain; then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more.

Joel iii. 1, 2, 16, 17.

# HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

## THIRTY-SIXTH WEEK.

### MORNING WORSHIP.

GRACIOUS God, who hast made a covenant of unspeakable grace and mercy with us in Christ Jesus, and conveyed to us therein an heavenly inheritance, to the end that we should sincerely obey His commands, which is our reasonable service, grant that we may evermore rejoice in Thee, and walk worthy of our holy calling, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

### HYMN, *or Psalm* cviii. 1-6.

AWAKE, my soul, and with the sun  
Thy daily stage of duty run:  
Shake off dull sloth, and joyful rise  
To pay thy morning sacrifice.

Thy precious time misspent, redeem;  
Each present day, thy last, esteem;  
Improve thy talent with due care;  
For the Great Day thyself prepare.

In conversation be sincere;  
Keep conscience as the noon-tide clear.  
Think how All-seeing God thy ways,  
Thy every secret thought, surveys.

Wake, and lift up thyself, my heart,  
And with the angels bear thy part,  
Who all night long, unwearied sing  
High praise to the Eternal King.

All praise to Thee, who safe hast kept,  
And hast refreshed me while I slept.  
Grant Lord, when I from death shall wake,  
I may of endless life partake.

Lord, I my vows to Thee renew:  
Scatter my sins as morning dew:  
Guard my first springs of thought and will,  
And with Thyself my spirit fill.

Direct, control, suggest, this day,  
All I design, or do, or say;  
That all my powers, with all their might,  
In thy sole glory may unite.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow:  
Praise Him, all creatures here below:  
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host:  
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

#### RUTH I. 1-17.

NOW it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land: and a certain man of Beth-lehem-judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons. 2. And the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Beth-lehem-judah: and they came into the country of Moab, and continued there. 3. And Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left, and her two sons. 4. And they took them wives of the women of Moab; the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth: and they dwelt there about ten years. 5. And Mahlon and

Chilion died also both of them; and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband. 6. Then she arose with her daughters-in-law, that she might return from the country of Moab: for she had heard in the country of Moab how that the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread. 7.

Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah. 8. And Naomi said unto her two daughters-in-law, Go, return each to her mother's house: the Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me. 9. The Lord grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them: and they lifted up their voice, and wept. 10. And they said unto her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy people. 11. And Naomi said, Turn again, my daughters; why will ye go with me? are there yet any more sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands? 12. Turn again, my daughters; go your way; for I am too old to have an husband. If I should say, I have hope, if I should have an husband also to-night, and should also bear sons, 13. Would ye tarry for them till they were grown? would ye stay for them from having husbands? nay, my daughters; for it grieveth me much for your sakes, that the hand of the Lord is gone out against me. 14. And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law; but Ruth clave unto her. 15. And she said,

behold, thy sister-in-law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister-in-law. 16. And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.

-----

*Prayer.*

O LORD our God, Father everlasting and full of compassion! hear from the heavens our prayers and supplications, which we pour forth before Thy throne. In the multitude of Thy mercies Thou hast not only created us reasonable creatures, but also of Thine inestimable goodness Thou hast sent the great Angel of the covenant, our Lord Jesus Christ, to redeem us. By Him Thy wrath is taken away, the law is satisfied, the power of death, of hell, and of Satan is broken. Behold, when we lay in the shadow of death, in fearful darkness of the soul, Thou madest the light of Thy gospel to shine upon us, showing us the way to life everlasting. With these spiritual benefits it hath pleased Thee to continue temporal blessings. Thou hast been our



hope, our fortress, and our God. Thou hast covered us with thy feathers, and under Thy wings Thou hast made us to trust. Grant us, O merciful Father, thankful hearts for these Thy manifold favours. Open our mouths to sound forth Thy praise, and offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving, wherein Thou dost delight. And we most humbly beseech Thee give us unfeigned repentance for our past unthankfulness to Thee; create in us new hearts, work in us sorrow for our sins, and hatred of the same, and a hearty love unto Thy righteousness, that we, being not conformed unto this wicked world, but making thy will the order of our life, may offer ourselves up a living sacrifice unto Thee, consecrating to Thy glory both body and soul, with all our powers.

Preserve us, good Lord, from the thralldom of sin and the bondage of unbelief; continue the light of Thy glorious gospel among us; purge our land of all violence, uncleanness, oppression, and every other evil that defiles Thine inheritance; arm us Thy servants with Thy power, to strive against Satan, the flesh and the world, and all things that would beguile us from our allegiance unto Thee; that, walking in Thy paths, and obeying Thy blessed ordinances, we may end our lives to the honour of Thy name.

O God, who hast given us Thy Holy Scriptures for our instruction, we beseech Thee by Thy grace to enlighten our minds and cleanse our hearts, that we, having read, heard,

and meditated upon them, may rightly understand and heartily embrace the things Thou hast revealed. Give efficacy to the preaching of the gospel, that through the operation of the Holy Ghost this good seed may be received into our hearts as into good ground; and that we may not only hear Thy word, but keep it, living in conformity with Thy precepts, so that we may finally attain everlasting salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O LORD, to whom belongeth the earth, with the fulness thereof, and whose bountiful hand liberally supplieth the wants of every living thing, grant that we whom Thou hast created, preserved, and redeemed, may evermore possess Thyself as our true inheritance, and in Thee all things, through faith in Him who was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might become rich. *Amen.*

## HYMN.

ALL people that on earth do dwell  
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice  
Him serve with mirth, his praise forth tell  
Come ye before Him and rejoice.

Know that the Lord is God indeed;  
Without our aid He did us make;  
We are his flock, He doth us feed,  
And for his sheep He doth us take.

O enter then his gates with praise,  
Approach with joy his courts unto:  
Praise, laud, and bless his name always,  
For it is seemly so to do.

For why, the Lord our God is good,  
His mercy is for ever sure;  
His truth at all times firmly stood,  
And shall from age to age endure.

PSALM LXXIII. 1-20.

TRULY God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart. 2. But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped. 3. For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. 4. For there are no bands in their death; but their strength is firm. 5. They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men. 6. Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment. 7. Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish 8. They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression: they speak loftily. 9. They set their mouth against the heavens; and their tongue walketh through the earth. 10. Therefore his people return hither; and waters of a full cup are wrung out to them: 11 And they say, How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the most High? 12. Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches. 13. Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency. 14. For all day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning. 15. If I say, I will speak thus; behold I should offend against the generation of thy children. 16. When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me. 17. Until I went into the sanctuary of God;

then understood I their end. 18. Surely thou didst set them in slippery places; thou castedst them down into destruction. 19. How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors. 20. As a dream when one awaketh; so O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image.

### ECCLESIASTES V. 8-13.

IF thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the matter: for he that is higher than the highest regardeth; and there be higher than they. 9. Moreover, the profit of the earth is for all: the king himself is served by the field. 10. He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase. This is also vanity. 11. When goods increase, they are increased that eat them, and what good is there to the owners thereof, saving the beholding of them with their eyes? 12. The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much; but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep. 13. There is a sore evil which I have seen under the sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt.

## SERMON XXXVI.

“THERE WAS A CERTAIN RICH MAN, WHICH WAS CLOTHED IN PURPLE AND FINE LINEN, AND FARED SUMPTUOUSLY EVERY DAY: AND THERE WAS A CERTAIN BEGGAR NAMED LAZARUS, WHICH WAS LAID AT HIS GATE, FULL OF SORES,” ETC.

-- Luke xvi. 19-31.

WE are all, I dare say, more or less familiar with the words of this story. But many of us may not have thought upon them, nor brought home to ourselves, as we ought to have done, Christ's teaching as a personal thing -- just as much as if it were spoken in our own hearing by Him now, or were addressed to us individually. Nor shall we, at this time, receive any good whatever from the parable -- no more than from the idlest gossip read in a newspaper -- unless we are able, by his grace, to remember who is speaking to us in these words, and try to understand their meaning, and to feel responsibility for the manner in which they are received.

This parable presents to us more than one remarkable contrast, which cannot but arrest our attention: --

1. Let us, for example, consider the contrast between the rich and the poor man *during life*: “There was a certain

rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: and there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores."

In this remarkable picture we are attracted first by a splendid mansion, with its outer gate and inner court, its suites of apartments, architectural embellishments, elegant furniture -- whatever, in short is tasteful, refined, and courtly -- with all the accompaniments of servants and equipages. This is the house of "a certain rich man." we know not his name now -- that has perished; but wherever he lived, or whoever he was, he was once well known. Tradesmen found it profitable to have him as a customer, and were proud in being able to announce the fact to others. Those who were ambitious to be in "good society" were glad, no doubt, of his acquaintance, and much gratified by a friendly greeting from him in the way. Young men rose greatly in their own estimation when they could tell their acquaintances how they visited this man, and were received as guests at his table; and they descanted upon all they saw in his splendid mansion -- how perfect everything was done, how delicious were the wines, how superb the plate, how choice the cooking, how numerous and well-trained the servants, how, indeed, everything was in the first style!

And Dives himself ! so refined in manner, so generous in his hospitality, so thoroughly the well-bred man of the world. And to know him, and call him by some familiar name, and be on easy terms with him, was a passport to the best society of the neighbourhood. If any person expressed the hope that one to whom God had been so generous, and whom He had so richly endowed, was acquainted with his Maker, and thought of duty, and realized his responsibility for all this rank, and money, and influence, those pledged admirers of his excellences were no doubt ready to defend him against insinuations from such “cant” and “hypocrisy.” What right had any one to doubt that Dives was as good as needs be, and sure of heaven? Could they point to any dishonourable action he had ever done? No. Did he not acquire his property fairly? Yes. Was there any sin in being rich? None. What “priest” or “Pharisee” would not partake of his cheer, and drink his wine? Very true. And if the man chose to wear costly robes of Tyrian dye, and fine linen of Egypt, and to fare sumptuously every day, what was wrong in all this? As for prayers or preachings, Sunday synagogues or temple services, these were between a man’s own conscience and God. It might be that he gave no money to help on objects of benevolence -- or “had too many other things to do with his money” -- or “thought it very impertinent to be so frequently asked for it” -- or “wished people would attend to their own business and



leave him alone” -- but who could blame him for doing with his own as he pleased? “Dives,” so his defenders always might have alleged, was neither greedy nor rapacious, but a kind-hearted, gentlemanly man, who thoroughly enjoyed himself -- that was all! Yes, that indeed was all!

And close beside his outer gate was a man whose presence was a constant memorial of suffering humanity. His name, strange to say, is preserved -- Lazarus. He was covered with sores -- a shuddering sight. And these were exposed, for the man was a pauper, and no provision made for him: he being dependent on charity, and thus forced to witness for his pain by mute signs of suffering. He sat at the rich man's gate -- for it was a place of great concourse -- a broad gate, through which multitudes thronged; and many of those were able to give, and some did, no doubt, give of their abundance; while a few crumbs possibly fell to him from the rich man's table. But his kindest friends, after all, were the dogs, who licked his sores; for God's kindness is so inexhaustible, that He has some for the hearts of the very brutes, and which is not driven out of them, as it sometimes is from the hearts of their masters. And Lazarus sat there day by day -- silent and alone at night, with stars overhead, and no boon companions with him, but the dogs only!

No one was ambitious of having Lazarus as an acquaintance. Living or dying, what was he worth? How

men would have smiled to have quoted his opinions of things, or talked of consulting his feelings or likings! Dives was somebody, but who was Lazarus? Who was he? A beggar! Yes, and something more! “Behold, now are we the sons of God! It doth not yet appear what we shall be.” And, therefore, because it “did not appear” to the eye of sense, few, if any, perceived that Lazarus was a son of God, and an heir of heaven; that beneath the rags were royal vestments; and that he had a great sum in bank -- a treasure that waxed not old, eternal in the heavens; that possessing nothing, he had all things; and that, not dogs, but angels ministered to him! For Lazarus knew God, of whom Dives was ignorant; and he trusted that God amidst his poverty, who Dives, amidst his riches, lived without. Dives worshipped self; Lazarus worshipped God.

2. Consider, in the second place, the contrast which is presented between Dives and Lazarus in their *deaths*.

They both died, with what relative measure of pain or difficulty we know not. But doubtless the death of the rich man was a much more memorable affair than that of the beggar. The rich man had heard of a future state of suffering or of happiness; but what preparation had he made to escape the one and obtain the other? Did he ever think it possible -- if he ever dared to think at all -- that God would recognize him as a “faithful servant?” But the sickness comes, and self-denial is forced upon him. How sad to be

prevented from going to that party, or from receiving this company; to be obliged to be confined to his house, and to his couch; to feel the pain and the weakness increase; to have first the suspicion, then the certainty, that out of this house he must go, and leave the purple for the sepulchre, and the sumptuous feast for the worms, and go off on the long, long journey -- O! whither? And he has no true friend to warn him; for he has selfishly surrounded himself for years with those who were selfish like himself, and who, therefore, would only see to it that they would make themselves agreeable to the last; and whatever they might say behind his back -- whatever hard and unfeeling things -- yet before himself they would try to be all that was pleasing; and to help him, forsooth, to be cheerful, and to banish gloomy thoughts of death, or of God, or a future state, and "all that sort of thing;" and rather to hear the gossip of the day, and the politics of the government, or the scandal of the town, and the state of trade; until, by and by, there was much weakness, and pain, and evident approaches of decay, that it was no longer pleasing to have anything to do with such suffering. But at last there is a hurrying to and fro, and a sending for the physician, for Dives is dying fast; and then the mansion is silent, for he is lying there dead and senseless, as a sculptured stone. And no man in the house knows now what has become of him, if anyone asks himself the question. He has five brothers very

much like himself, and they see the body, and say, this is our brother, and talk low and soft as if he heard them. They speak of the evil things which he did not, and of the kind things which he did; and remember how well and cheerful he was on such a day, but a few weeks ago; and what he said to them the last time they met; or how long he had been drooping; or how rapidly he sunk; or how well or strangely he had left his affairs. And these same affairs gave rise to a world of talk in the neighbourhood; and Dives, his house, furniture, money, and five brothers, and the grand funeral, and the noble sepulchre, are the staple of the conversation of the hour. But Dives, the living man -- oh! miserable-- where is he? What cares he for this babble now?

Lazarus, too, is gone! He died, perhaps, where he had sat -- the dogs licking his silent face. Or he died in some house -- God looking on, angels ministering, but the world caring not. His door, perhaps, was longer shut in the morning than usual; but curiosity being excited, the house was entered, and the old beggar found dead. His body was got rid of some way or other, and no one thought more about him, unless, perhaps, the new beggar did so who occupied his seat at the gate of the rich man's successor, and was glad of the preferment from a less profitable post. And the world moved on. But while the streets of the town were busy as ever, and men bought and sold, and made

gain, as in the world before the flood; and brothers, and sisters, and friends met, and talked about the dead -- what a strange scene is taking place beyond the grave!

3. This would lead us, if our present opportunity admitted of it, to consider Dives and Lazarus in *eternity*. But what words of ours dare fill up this picture by our Lord! “And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried, and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.”

One word only: Jesus here teaches that a man like Dives is lost; for it is his character which is most dwelt upon here, and is presented to us as a warning. He is lost, and his misery is represented as being very great. Now, why was he lost? what was it which destroyed his soul? what had he -- what did he -- which, in Christ’s judgment, was so wicked that he selects him as a type of one most surely doomed to perdition? It needs no reflection to notice that he is charged with nothing of what the world calls

criminal -- such as theft, dishonour, adultery, murder, or the like. This alone is remarkable. Nay, he is represented in his lost condition to have had some interest in his godless brothers left behind. Nor do any of you believe that his crime was being rich. We are not likely, in those days, to reach that measure of infidelity in the mammon god. Riches comprehend God's best earthly gifts. The man is not even described as one who spent his substance in riotous living. For aught that is said of him there was nothing to offend the most delicate taste in his house -- nothing to obtrude itself offensively on the man of piety even, who might chance to visit it. He is described merely as a rich man, clothed in purple and fine linen, who fared sumptuously every day. Outwardly, that was all; but inwardly, what was his character? He lived to himself, without God! His life is summed up in that terrible memento: "Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things." There were good things which he desired, and recognized as his good things and he got them. He demanded from his father his portion of goods; and he got his portion -- all he wished for. He wished wealth, and he got it. He wished the purple and the linen, and Tyre and Egypt were at his service. He wished the splendid banquet, and earth, sea, and air furnished it; birds, and beasts, and fish were seized, deprived of life and enjoyment, and laid before him. He wished guests to gather round him to help him the better to

enjoy self, and to flatter self, and sympathize with self, and to praise self; so that, in their every smile, and obeisance, and expression of delight, he should see self reflected -- and troops of guests arrived on the appointed day! He desired sleep, and sleep came; a soft couch, and it was spread for him; an easy day of luxurious repose, and the servants hushed the house in silence, and no one disturbed him with the noise and toil of the weary world. "Son, remember!" Go back to thy childhood, and follow up thy history from its earliest until its latest hour. Behold the scroll unfold itself before memory and conscience of all the past -- read it, examine it - hast thou not got all thy good things? Verily, thou has had *thy* reward!

Yes, *his* good things! But among the good things longed for, prayed for, laboured for, there was no such good thing as likeness to God, or meetness for eternity, or perfection in love, or deepening in humility, or outgoing of a largeheartedness to mankind, or living for others; and so these he never got, for these he never wished. He desired no things but such as earth and time could furnish, and these earth and time gave! But one thing was quite forgot and quite despised. O! horror of horrors! O! life of vanity and a lie! God was not in all his thoughts! The living God was not known, nor loved, nor cared for, nor sought for. The very thought of God, Maker, Preserver, Governor, Father, was banished as being not in harmony with the life

he was living and enjoying! Dives was an ungodly man; and it mattered not what he worshipped; whether it was a god of the lowest lust, or most refined pleasure, if he did not serve and worship, as his supreme good, the only living and true God! Dives was a lover of pleasure more than a lover of God. He loved the world and the things of the world more than the Father! And thus, we perceive, Dives does not necessarily represent men very rich or very poor, but all men who, whether rich or poor, are not “rich towards God” -- all men who think “their life consisteth in the abundance of the things they possess,” whether they really have this abundance, or wish to have it, or are half-mad because they have lost it, or curse God and forsake Him because they cannot have it. He represents a great class; and therefore it is well for us to look at him steadily, and inspect him very closely, and see if we are following him in the broad way.

Let us, then, ask ourselves the question, What are our good things? or what are the things, the possession or enjoyment of which our life consists in? Are they such things as death cannot touch? such things as our souls will find on the other side of the grave as well as on this? Such things as will prove its good things millions of years hence as well as now? Ah! Be assured that nothing can satisfy the everliving soul but its everliving Creator -- that he who seeks God as his eternal good, and who can be satisfied with nothing less, will surely find Him; and to such an one it



never can be said, “Thou has had thy things,” but “Thou has and ever shalt have Him who is goodness itself.” Hear the solemn words of the apostle: -- “but godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. But they that *will* be rich” -- insist, as it were, on being so -- “fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the” -- or a -- “root of all evil; which, while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things, and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and has professed a good profession before many witnesses. Charge them that are rich in this world that they be not highminded, nor *trust* in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life;” for “This is life eternal, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent!” O! let us be able truly to say: “The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of

my cup:" "Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none on earth that my heart would desire beside thee. My heart and flesh faint and fail; but God is the strength of my heart, and portion for ever." Amen. -- EDITOR.

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

BEHOLD, THY KING COMETH UNTO THEE.

IN the writings of one of the old prophets, there is a very striking and beautiful passage which says, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy king cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." These words were spoken beforehand, hundreds of years beforehand, of the Lord Jesus Christ. You notice that they are very minute and exact, in the description they give of the way in which the King of Zion was to come to his own city. How they were brought to pass is what I am now going to tell you.

The morning after they had made a supper for Christ in Bethany, where Martha served, and Lazarus sat at the table, and Mary filled the house with the odour of the ointment which she poured on Jesus' feet, the Lord gave a

command to two of his disciples. I do not know which two of the twelve they were, but no doubt they were pleased with their mission. He told them to go into the village, which was seen at the time over against where they were standing, and bring him an ass and a colt that they would find tied there. He said to them to loose them without any hesitation or fear: for if any person should ask them why they were loosing them, they were just to answer, The Lord hath need of them, and all would be right. Jesus knew that he had all hearts in his hands, and the best claim to the service of his own creatures.

Having been told what to do, away the two disciples went. When they came into the village, which was one near Bethany, sure enough there, at a door in a place where two roads met, stood an ass tied, and a colt also tied beside her. The colt no doubt was the foal of the ass, standing now beside its mother. It was quite young, and no one as yet had ever rode on it. Seeing thus what they had been led to expect, the disciples began at once to loose the beasts. Some people were standing near, among others the persons to whom the ass and the colt belonged, and they said very naturally, What are you doing? Why are you loosing the colt? They mentioned the colt particularly, because, I suppose, the disciples had begun with him; and indeed, it was the young ass that was specially wanted, though its mother was also to be brought. When the disciples heard

the question of the owners, they gave the very answer that Jesus put into their mouths. They said The Lord needs him; and there was not another word of objection. So they took the ass and the colt and brought them to Jesus.

We never read of Jesus riding at any other time. But he did not need to learn the art. And though the colt had never been sat on before by anyone, there was no fear of its being wild and disobedient. So when Jesus would mount it, his disciples made a kind of saddle of their cloaks, and set him on its back. The young colt went peacefully on under its blessed burden, and the ass paced meekly by its side. This was the way in which the King of Zion wanted to ride into the city. He did not choose to be driven in a chariot, nor to get a proud prancing horse to carry him, with a sword hanging and glancing at his side. For he was not a king come to make war on men's lives, and to conquer the world by force of arms: he was a king of truth, and was come not to slay men, but to save them. So he came meek and lowly, wishing all to meet him not as a foe, but as a friend. The Jews had high notions about a Christ who should make their nation stronger than Rome, and mistress of the world; but Jesus wished to show them that he would not fight as David had needed to do, that he would be king of subdued kingdoms only by subduing hearts.

By the time the things I have told about had been done, a crowd had gathered round the place where the Saviour

got up to ride. As he moved on, they followed. Then they became very joyfully excited, and began to make a carpet for him as he rode along the way, by spreading their cloaks on the road, and cutting down soft green branches from the trees, and strewing them in his path. This led to a crowd of people being in front of him, while a multitude followed close behind. Then they began to sing from one of the psalms; and loud and clear they sent up into the skies this cry: Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!

Shortly the procession came to the brow of the mount of Olives, from which the city of Jerusalem could be clearly seen, and lying near at hand. Here a strange thing took place. Even while the shouts of praise were rising from all around him, Jesus began to weep, not silently, but with loud sobbings. Those near him came to learn the cause; for they heard him say, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, would that thou hadst known, at least in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace; but now they are hid from thine eyes! While this was happening, it came to be known in the city that Jesus was coming, along with a throng of followers; and another crowd began to pour out through the gates to meet him. These also broke branches off the palm trees, and as they moved up from the valley and climbed the slope of the hill, waving them in their hands, the road looked like a green wood. They took up the song, too, when they met

with those who were coming down, and turning round with them, cried out, Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed be the kingdom of our father David that cometh in the name of the Lord! Glory in the highest! What a wave of joy and joyous shout that day rolled down the side of the mount of Olives, and through the valley where the brook of Kidron was flowing, and up to the city gate, as Jesus rode on in lowly pomp, the Prince of peace, in the midst of the multitudes!

The pharisees were watching all, and they were very angry. They pretended to think that it was very unseemly, in the disciples of one who had such claims as Christ's, to do such things. So they went to Jesus, and quite hinting that he was to blame if he allowed the rejoicings to go on, since he could put a stop to them if he liked, they said, Master, rebuke thy disciples; tell them to give over. But Jesus answered that he would not do so, for said he, I tell you that if these should hold their peace, the very stones would cry out at once.

But the most interesting thing of all happened after Jesus had come into the city. The whole place was quite in a commotion. The streets were filled, and people were asking eagerly, What is all this about? who is this? Then some would answer, It is the great prophet of Nazareth of Galilee: it is Jesus! Meanwhile slowly, as the throng would let him, the Saviour rode through the streets towards the

temple, and alighting from the colt, went into the courts; and finding all sorts of merchandise in sheep and oxen and doves going on, he drove the buyers and sellers out, and poured out the money of the money-changers, and overturned their tables, and said, Do not make my Father's house which is a house of prayer, a den of thieves. Then the blind and the lame came to him, and he healed them. A throng of little children, too, had gathered into the courts from which the traffickers had been driven; and taking up the song of the older people, they began to cry out, with their sweet little voices, Hosanna! hosanna to the Son of David. This made the scowling priests and scribes very angry indeed. They could not conceal their hatred. They went to Jesus, and as if in contempt, they said, Do you hear what these are saying! They meant to hint that he must be very silly and weak to allow a lot of boys and girls to cry out in that way about him. But Jesus always loved the little children. He would not let his own disciples on one occasion frown them away. He said to them, Suffer the little ones to come to me; by no means hinder them. You may be sure he would not tell them to be silent, when his bitter foes wanted him to do it. No; he answered them at once, Yes, I hear them; and did you never read in the Scriptures, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast brought the best praise of all? So the children still sang on, till Jesus having looked round on all things, went away back again to the

mount of Olives. Thus ended the only day of outward triumph in Christ's life.

Turning again for a moment to the prophecy to which I referred at first, I wish you to try and understand how the events of that day did not make the fulfilment of the prophecy. They rather repeated it, than fulfilled it. No doubt the thing described came to pass in the very letter; but that literal coming to pass was just a new utterance of the prophecy. It was providence in its own way repeating what prophecy in its own way had said. The meaning of both was a pointing out of the peaceful, blessed, happy character of Christ's reign in men's hearts, and men's world, when they received him. As he rode into Jerusalem, meek, lowly, bringing salvation, and welcomed with songs, may he ride into our hearts, and into all the earth!

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Which of the prophetic books of the Old Testament contains the prophecy quoted at the beginning of the story?
2. Where do we read in the Old Testament of any incident in which God employed an ass in a wonderful way to do his will?



3. At what other time did Christ give a commission to two of his disciples, giving them a sign to direct them, and telling them what to say?

4. Can you find a prophecy where Christ is represented as riding like a great warrior? and do you notice what singular thing is there said about his sword?

5. Can you find a prophecy where Christ's reign is beautifully pictured, in figures taken from the lower animals, as a reign of peace?

6. What psalm did the crowds around Jesus quote, when they sang Hosannas?

7. What very joyous procession of a king and a crowd of people into the city of Jerusalem, do we read of in the Old Testament?

8. When did the pharisees find fault with the disciples for sabbath-breaking and when for transgressing the tradition of the elders?

9. Can you find a verse in one of the prophets in which God's house is twice called a house of prayer?

10. Christ spoke of the stones crying out: who speaks of God making children of them?

11. Where is Christ represented as a victorious rider, armed with arrows?

ANSWERS to the preceding questions will easily be found by consulting Zech. ix.; Numb. xxii.; Luke xxii.; Rev. xix.; Isa. xi.; Ps. cxviii.; 1 Chron. xv.; Luke vi. and Matt. xv.; Isa. lvi.; Matt. iii.; Ps. xlv.

---

*Prayer.*

O FATHER, Thou hast now set Thy king upon Thy holy hill of Zion. We thank Thee that he reigns as the Prince of peace. We pray that He may take the throne of our hearts, and reign there. We open the gates to Him, we ask Him to enter, we wish him to cast out all that in us is against His rule, as He cast the traffickers out of the temple. O let the time come soon, when His reign shall be owned in all the earth, when all wars shall cease, and nothing shall hurt nor destroy in all Thy holy mountain. We rejoice to think that Jesus loves the praises of little children. We desire to sing His praises. We would do it now, saying Worthy is the Lamb that was slain! Salvation to our God that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever. *Amen.*

## EVENING WORSHIP.

GLORIOUS God, who of Thy tender love towards mankind hast sent Thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, to take upon Him our flesh, and that in the form of a servant, and to suffer death, even the death of the cross, for our redemption, and that we should follow the example of His great humility, patience and obedience, mercifully grant that this mind may be in us which was also in Christ Jesus, that we may both follow the example of His humble obedience and patient suffering, and also be made partakers of His glorious resurrection, to live with Thee for ever. Grant this for the sake of Thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* xliii. 1-5.

APPROACH, my soul, the mercy seat,  
Where Jesus answers prayer;  
Then humbly fall before his feet,  
For none can perish there.

Thy promise is my only plea:  
With this I venture nigh.  
Thou callest burdened souls to Thee,  
And such O Lord, am I.

Bowed down beneath a load of sin,  
By Satan sorely pressed,  
By wars without, and fears within,  
I come to Thee for rest.

Be Thou my shield and hiding-place;  
That, sheltered near thy side,  
I may my fierce accuser face,  
And tell him, Thou hast died.

O wondrous love to bleed and die,  
To bear the cross and shame,  
That guilty sinners, such as I  
Might plead thy gracious name!

## JOHN 1. 35-49.

AGAIN, the next day after, John stood, and two of his disciples; 36. And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, behold the Lamb of God! 37. And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. 38. Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, what seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi (which is to say, being interpreted, Master), where dwellest thou? 39. He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour. 40. One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. 41. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. 42. And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is, by interpretation, A stone. 43. The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me. 44. Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. 45. Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. 46. And Nathanael said unto him, Can anything good come out of

Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. 47. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! 48. Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee. 49. Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.

### JOHN III. 1-10.

THERE was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: 2. The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. 3. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. 4. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? 5. Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. 8.

The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. 9. Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? 10. Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?

-----

*Prayer.*

O LORD our God, we lift up our hearts unto Thee, in grateful acknowledgment of all Thy mercies. We praise Thee as the source of all blessing, full of compassion and goodness unto the children of men. We thank Thee that Thou hast formed us reasonable creatures, capable of knowing and serving Thee. We bless Thee for Thy preserving care over us, and for all our temporal enjoyments. Above all we praise Thee, O most merciful Father, for Thy spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, for the Holy Spirit and His influences, for the covenant of grace and all the precious promises thereof, for Thy word, for the gospel ministry, and all thine ordinances. For these benefits we bless Thee, O God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy

Ghost; our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. And now, Lord, we commit ourselves to Thee; we hope in Thy mercies, and we wait for thy salvation. Accept our worship, and forgive our sins, in the name of our crucified and exalted Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

Thy glory, O God! is great in all the churches, and the praises of Thy name resound in the assemblies of Thy saints. We Thy servants would humble ourselves before Thee. We worship Thine infinite Majesty. We celebrate Thy wisdom, power, and goodness, that shine forth in the works of creation and redemption through Jesus Christ our Lord. We bless thee for all temporal and spiritual good that we continually receive at thy bountiful hands. But more especially, with all Thy people assembled this day, we praise Thee that Thou didst send into the world Thy Son to save us; and having delivered Him up for our offences, didst raise Him again for our justification; and through His glorious resurrection hast given us the blessed hope of everlasting life. We rejoice in the hope of His second coming “unto salvation;” for “we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as he is. O Lord! May these our thanksgivings come up with acceptance before Thy throne. Make us worthy at the last day to have part in the resurrection of the just, and the glory of the kingdom of heaven, whither Jesus the Forerunner is for us entered; where now He lives and



reigns, and is worshipped and glorified, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, God blessed for ever. *Amen.*

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

#### *Morning.*

**And in that day shall ye say, Praise the Lord, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted.**

Sing unto the Lord; for he hath done excellent things; this is known in all the earth.

Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.

I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.

For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings.

Isa. xii. 4, 5, 6.      Jer. ix. 24.      Hos. vi. 6.

#### *Evening.*

**Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.**

I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity.

Hos. vi. 3.      Jer. xxxi. 33, 34.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**And, behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here Elijah?**

And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

And the Lord said, Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.

Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.

I Kings xix. 9, 10, 18.    Isa. viii. 13.

*Evening.*

**Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles; that, whereas they speak against you as evil-doeers, they may, by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.**

He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous:

He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints.

Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God.

1 Pet. ii. 12.

Prov. ii. 7, 8.

Ps. l. 23.

## WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead:**

Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver; in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us.

But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

Who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

2 Cor. i. 9, 10.

2 Tim. i. 10.

1 Thess. v. 10.

*Evening.*

**Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults.**

Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.

Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.

He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

Ps. xix. 12, 13. 1 John iii. 7, 8, 9.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.**

Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves.

No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day.

The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?

Jesus said, As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

This is that bread which came down from heaven: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.

John vi. 41, 43, 44, 52, 57, 58.

*Evening.*

**For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread:**

And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me

After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.

1 Cor. xi. 23, 24, 25, 26.      John vi. 56.

## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**Why standest thou afar off, O Lord? Why hidest thou thyself in times of trouble?**

The wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor: let them be taken in the devices that they have imagined.

For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth.

Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him; for they shall eat the fruit of their doings.

Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him; for the reward of his hands shall be given him.

Ps. x. 1, 2, 3.

Isa. iii. 10, 11.

*Evening.*

**Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy we faint not.**

Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed:

But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses,

In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings.

2 Cor. iv. 1.

2 Cor. vi. 3, 4, 5.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love.**

For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things, without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.

And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for all these are things that I hate, saith the Lord.

1 John iv. 8. 2 Cor. xi. 2, 3. 1 Tim. v. 21. Zech. viii. 17.

*Evening.*

**And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.**

And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man



doth not live by bread only, but by every word that  
proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live.

Deut. viii. 2, 3.

HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

THIRTY-SEVENTH WEEK.

MORNING WORSHIP.

O LORD, who hast taught us that all our doings without charity are nothing worth, send Thy Holy Ghost, and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of charity, which is humble, meek, kind, long-suffering and patient, the very bond of peace and of all virtues; grant this for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* li. 7-13.

LORD, when we bend before thy throne,  
And our confessions pour,  
Teach us to feel the sins we own,  
And hate what we depore,  
Our contrite spirits pitying see;  
True penitence impart;  
Then let a healing ray from thee  
Beam hope on every heart.

When we disclose our wants in prayer,  
May we our will resign;  
Let not a thought our bosoms share  
Which is not wholly thine.  
Let faith each meek petition fill,  
And waft it to the skies;  
And teach our hearts 'tis goodness still  
That grants it or denies.

### I. SAMUEL II. 1-10.

AND Hannah prayed, and said, My heart rejoiceth in the Lord; mine horn is exalted in the Lord; my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; because I rejoice in thy salvation. 2. There is none holy as the Lord: for there is none besides thee; neither is there any rock like our God. 3. Talk no more so exceedingly proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighted. 4. The bows of the mighty men are broken, and they that stumbled are girded with strength. 5. They that were full have hired out themselves for bread; and they that were hungry ceased: so that the barren hath born seven; and she that hath many children is waxed feeble. 6. The Lord killeth, and maketh alive, he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up. 7.

The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up. 8. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the Lord's and he hath set the world upon them, &c.

-----

*Prayer.*

ALMIGHTY God, give us grace whereby we may serve Thee acceptably, with reverence and godly fear. Who is a strong Lord like unto Thee? The pillars of heaven tremble, and are astonished at Thy reproof. Thou removest the mountains and they know not, and overturnest them in Thine anger. Thou commandest the sun and it shineth not, and sealest up the stars. In Thy hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind. Wherewith shall we come before Thee, O Lord, in whose sight the heavens are not clean, and who art of purer eyes than to behold evil? We humbly and reverently bow before Thy sovereign majesty; abashed and confounded we tremble at the thought of Thine infinite purity. Will God in very deed dwell with men upon the earth? We have turned our backs upon Thee, and justly mightst Thou turn Thy face from us.

Our trust is in Thy mercy, and on that sure word of promise on which Thou hast caused us to hope. Blessed be Thy name, we follow not cunningly devised fables. Assured that Thy faithfulness Thou shalt establish in the very heavens, and that one good word shall not fail of all that Thou hast spoken, we lift up our cry unto Thee in the name of Thy Son, and entreat Thee, for His sake, to be merciful unto us sinners. We beseech Thee, O God, to have compassion upon us, and save us.

Our souls cleave to the dust. When we would do good, evil is present with us. Even did we ever act, up to the measure of our power, in conformity with Thy will, we must still say that we are unprofitable servants; we have done only that which it was our duty to do. But how often have we failed to do what we could! How often, in the hour of temptation, have we courted the assaults of our adversary the devil, and given him the advantage over us, by neglecting prayer to Thee for grace to help in time of need. How often have we fallen before temptations springing out of the unhallowed lusts and passions that reign in our members; and yielded ourselves an easy prey to the foes of our own house! Thy grace alone has kept us back from utter and irretrievable ruin; and not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name be the glory. Conscious of our infirmity, our waywardness, our sympathy with evil and the powers of evil, we come to Thee, O God, for strength, for

guidance, and for such a measure of the influences of Thy Spirit as will enable us to fight the good fight of faith, and to stand in the evil day.

We bless Thee for the sabbath, and for the tender and loving regard to our comfort and well-being which Thou hast shown in appointing it. Enable us this day to enter into the spirit of its holy exercise, and to value duly its exalted privileges. Turn away our eyes from beholding vanity, O God; and let neither the cares nor the pleasures of the world, nor any unhallowed thoughts of whatever kind, mingle or interfere with the homage which we offer unto Thee, or shed their deadening and polluting influences upon our minds. May our spiritual sight, purged and strengthened by that faith which purifies the heart, pierce through all those darkening and deceptive mists which sin and unbelief so abundantly create, and enter into that within the vail, whither the Forerunner hath for us entered, even Jesus, who is made an high priest for ever.

And Thee, O Divine Spirit, who givest life to those who are dead in trespasses and sins, we entreat to descend this day upon the churches, and form a people for Thyself to show forth Thy praise. O that Thou wouldst rend the heavens, that Thou wouldst come down, that the mountains might bow down at Thy presence, to make Thy name known to Thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble at Thy presence! O Captain of our salvation, gird Thy

sword upon Thy thigh, and in Thy majesty ride  
prosperously, because of truth, and meekness, and  
righteousness; let Thine arrows be sharp in the hearts of  
the King's enemies, whereby the people shall fall under  
Thee; and at the close of this day may multitudes, who, in  
their stoutness of heart, had hitherto maintained an attitude  
of hostility to Thee and to Thy cause, be found submitting  
to Thy righteous and benign sway. These our prayers, O  
Lord, we beseech Thee to grant, for Jesus' sake. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

FATHER of mercies, who causes the sun to shine and the rain to descend, so providing meat for all thy creatures in due season; evermore give us the bread of God which cometh down from heaven, that so we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, even Christ. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* lxxv. 9-13.

LORD of the harvest, once again  
We thank Thee for the ripened grain;  
For crops safe carried, sent to cheer  
Thy servants through another year;  
For all sweet holy thoughts supplied  
By seed-time, and by harvest-tide.

Daily, O LORD, our prayers be said,  
As Thou hast taught, for daily bread:  
But not alone bodies feed,  
Supply our fainting spirits' need:  
O Bread of Life, from day to day,  
Be Thou their comfort, food, and stay!



## PSALM LXV.

PRAISE waiteth for thee, O God, in Zion: and unto thee shall the vow be performed. 2. O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come. 3. Iniquities prevail against me: as for our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away. 4. Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple. 5. By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation; who art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea: 6. Which by his strength setteth fast the mountains; being girded with power: 7. Which stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people. 8. They also that dwell in the uttermost parts are afraid at thy tokens: thou makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice. 9. Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water: thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it. 10. Thou waterst the ridges thereof abundantly; thou settlest the furrows thereof; thou makest it soft with showers; thou blessest the springing thereof: 11. Thou crownest the year

with thy goodness; and thy paths drop fatness. 12. They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness; and the little hills rejoice on every side. 13. The pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing.

-----

### SERMON XXXVII.

“THEY JOY BEFORE THEE ACCORDING TO THE JOY IN  
HARVEST.” -- Isaiah iv. 3.

THE image here employed by the prophet is one which we must all recognize as a most graphic one. There are probably few who would not sympathize with the cheerful emotions congenial to such a season as harvest, when Nature, arrayed in all her loveliness, has again begun to pour the rich tribute of her bounty into the lap of man. As we pass through some fair and fertile district of our land, where every breeze is laden with fragrance, every field teems with fertility, every tree is covered with foliage or hangs heavy with fruit; or as we climb the hill that skirts some noble landscape where for miles on miles the broad acres are waving, a mimic sea of gold, beneath you, and

survey the busy toils of the reapers and listen to the merry shouts that rise, blended with the voices of birds and streams, now faintly echoing from the far hamlet, now more distinctly heard from the nearer homestead; and as, moreover, the happy associations connected with such a scene as this come before our mind -- visions of plenty and peace and comfort, of garners overflowing with goodly store, of homes and hearts made glad by nature's bounty -- we cannot resist the universal sentiment of cheerfulness and gratitude, and as it steals over our mind, we feel ourselves rejoicing before the great Bestower of all blessings, "rejoicing with the joy in harvest."

In further illustration of the analogy which these words suggest, let us consider in what respect the joy or happiness of the individual believer as well as of the Church at large may be conceived to resemble the harvest-joy.

I. One aspect of the harvest-joy which suggests a corresponding emotion in the spiritual experience of the believer, is that of *a joy which succeeds to a period of suspense and uncertainty*.

It is very obvious that the pleasure experienced from any happy or auspicious event, will be more or less vivid in proportion to the degree of doubt and anxiety that preceded it. Regularity and certainty in our enjoyments in some measure diminish their intensity; rarity and suspense greatly heighten them. The longer we labour for any good

thing, and the more numerous the conditions which render the result a dubious one, the greater will be our delight when all goes right at last, and the matter is brought to a successful issue.

Of this simple principle the text affords us two examples: “They joy,” says the prophet, “before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil.” In the latter of these we are led to contemplate the consummation of some warlike enterprise, the close of the brilliant campaign, the victorious warriors in the first flush of success, when after all the excitement, anxiety, and hazard of some mighty conflict on which vast consequences were staked, the thrilling shout of victory has been heard, and the victors are just beginning to repose amid the glory and the rapture and the rich rewards of conquest. The other example is one with which we are more immediately concerned. It is that of the husbandman, who, in the language of St. James, has “had long patience, waiting for the precious fruit of the earth until he might receive the early and latter rain. Exercising all his skill and experience in the selection of the crop and the preparation of the soil, he has ploughed and sown and gone through all the process of his husbandry, and then with anxious eye he has watched the course of the seasons and the progress of his work. Through the slowly rolling months, the fluctuations and uncertainties of weather and the remembrance of many

past disappointments have kept him in much doubt and uncertainty as to the result. But as the season crept on, the genial influences of Nature have come forth in unwonted benignity over the ripening fields; and at length, as he watches the busy reapers engaged in their rapid and peaceful conquests, his heart gladdens with the satisfaction of successful industry, and he “rejoices with the joy of harvest.”

Now to this sort of joy -- joy after long labour and suspense -- many parallels may be found in spiritual things. The successful termination of any inquiry or enterprise for our own good, or for the moral and spiritual welfare of others, would give rise to it. For instance, is it not emphatically realized in the feelings of the Christian parent when he contemplates the happy results of his watchful care over the early years of his children? No province of labour upon earth can call forth more anxious and incessant care, more thoughtful wisdom and sagacity, more forbearance, prudence, patience, than that of parental discipline and instruction. In none, I believe, will carelessness or neglect be more frequently avenged, even in this life, on those who are unfaithful to their trust; and in none, on the other hand, is the reward of fidelity more precious, or, in general, more sure. What soil can be compared with the soil of mind in fertility, in richness, in tractability, in the scope it presents for the most varied and skilful cultivation? Neglect it, and

its very richness will be manifested in the rank vigour and abundance of the crop of weeds that will speedily overspread its surface. Tend it, study its capacities, give yourself in good earnest to the sowing of the seed of knowledge, truth, piety, to the fostering and tending of their growth, to the eradication of the weeds of sloth and ignorance and selfishness; and though it may cost you many a weary hour, many a day and year of untold anxieties, yet a thousand instances prove how sweet, how unspeakably precious may be our reward even in this world. One can imagine -- would that it were oftener something more than imagination and theory! -- the case of a wise, tender, watchful Christian parent, as he prosecutes this high and laborious work of education. Dedicating his little ones in holy baptism to the Saviour, one can conceive him seizing the earliest moments of opening consciousness to sow the first seeds of Christian knowledge and holy thought and principle, eagerly watching the first indications of character, the first up-growth of disposition, temper, talent, above the yet virgin soil of mind -- cheered, it may be, by the hopeful signs of gentleness, goodness, native vigour, or pained, humiliated, and discouraged by the already too obvious germs of a stubborn, or selfish, or dull and intractable character. As years roll on, we can well suppose, even in the most fair and hopeful cases -- nay, in these more than others, -- how much trembling hope and anxiety, and

alternate elation and sinking of spirit, a pious and thoughtful parent must experience. When sickness visits the home, for instance, and the prattle of childhood is hushed, and the bright eye grows heavy and dull, and the fair young plant, bright with opening promise, droops and seems ready to wither away, the very beauty, and delicacy, and rare attractiveness of its unformed being will make the thought of losing it more sad, and call forth a more thrilling suspense and anxiety in the parent's mind. Or when temptations beset its path, and the auspicious progress of character threatens to be arrested, or the fond hopes and flattering promises of past years are rudely checked and disappointed by some grievous fault or failure, who can tell what pognant grief, what inexpressible heartfelt bitterness, such lapses in his child's history occasion in a good man's mind? But let us suppose, on the other hand, amidst all such occasional misgivings and anxieties, that as time slips on and the characters of their offspring become developed, the father or mother can perceive the more and manifest proofs that their long labours have not been lost; let us conceive them, as they look round on one and another and another member of that family circle, discerning in the innocent gentleness that beams in the countenance of one, and the manly integrity and truthfulness of another, and the gravity and thoughtfulness and intelligence of a third, and in the mutual love and amiableness and Christian sincerity

of all, the fruit of many prayers and efforts in years bygone; or yet again, as the little group becomes thinned of its numbers and one and another goes forth to the struggle of life, let us realize the fond delight of the parent in hearing of their advancement and honour, or, what is better still, in watching their holy and Christian lives; and finally, as the evening of life gathers on, let us imagine them cheered amid the infirmities of age by the reverence, the fond regard, the tender love and care of those over whose infant years they had watched, and looking forward to a blessed re-union with them in the loftier and purer intimacies of heaven -- oh! who can doubt that such parents would feel in all this a rich recompense for their former toils and fears, that in the fulness of their present satisfaction all their bygone anxieties would be forgotten, or remembered only to render that satisfaction the sweeter, and that in the fulfilment of their hopes and the frustration of their fears, there would be indeed to them a realization of that text -- "They joy before thee according to the joy in harvest."

II. The joy of harvest may be regarded as typical of the Christian's joy in this respect, that it is *a joy that is connected with active exertion*.

The mirth of the harvest-field is not a mere listless amusement. The shout that rings, or the song that rises cheerily from the reaper's lips, is the shout that inspires to effort, and the song that beguiles toil of its weariness and



fatigue. When it catches your ear as you pass by the wayside, or is born along and re-echoed from distant plain and valley and upland, it does not pain you like the vacant laugh of indolence, or the wild ribaldry that breaks forth from the tavern. It tells not of folly and reckless enjoyment, of wasted hours and wanton carousing, but of busy and honest exertion. It speaks not, like the sluggard's or the drunkard's merriment, of squandered substance, and squalid homes, and beggared broken-hearted families; it is the symbol rather of plenty, and peace, and comfort, of smiling face and well-clad forms, of garner overflowing with corn, and homes where the sunshine of prosperity smiles. It conveys to us, besides, the tidings not merely of labour that is profitable, but of labour that is pleasant, of toil that is pursued neither in grim silence, like the work of the overtasked mechanic, nor amid groans and curses, like the work of the slave or the felong, but with the merry and light-hearted song and jest that tell how the labourer *likes* his work.

And when it is averred that the joy of a Christian resembles the harvest-joy, may not the comparison remind us of that great law of man's nature which connects his true happiness and dignity with work? Man was not made for idleness. The world is but a great harvest-field, in which, each in his own place, we are called forth to take our part, and do our share of labour. Neither by the structure of our

nature, nor by the constitution of society, is there any room for the idler, or any possibility of true enjoyment and happiness without work. If we want to be truly happy, to attain in any measure to the real use and enjoyment of life, work of some kind we must have. There ought to be no play without work. No man is entitled to enjoyment who does not purchase it by labour. The sweetest holiday is that which we have earned by strenuous application. God has so made us that we must find our pleasure either *in* working, or as the *reward of* working. It is quite true that we may set a man to work for which he is not adapted, and which, therefore, will not be pleasant, but irksome and disagreeable; or we may so overburden him, even with work of the right kind, as to exhaust and break down his strength of body and vigour of mind. If God has endowed a man with high mental gifts, and you set him -- weak, it may be, in physical strength, and utterly deficient in manual dexterity -- to a trade or handicraft, where little or nothing of his intellectual power is called forth; or if, on the other hand, God has bestowed upon a man a sturdy frame and strong hand, and instead of setting him to the plough, or the saw, or the trowel, you must needs make a student and scholar of him -- no wonder such men are unhappy, no wonder they drag on, ill at ease, out of place and proportion, as would be a cart horse on the race-course, or a high-mettled steed harnessed to the hay-waggon. But in no

such case is the unhappiness any disproof of the law in question, that man's true joy is in labour. The only conclusion to be drawn from it is that every man must be put into his own peculiar sphere of labour -- set to do his own work. Or again, if we put a man even into the sort of place for which his talents are adapted, and yet goad and drive him on to incessant application, make his life all work and no play, till the jaded faculties, whether of mind or body, lose their elasticity, till the wheels of energy and buoyancy roll off, and the framework of life, like Pharaoh's chariots, drives heavily, no wonder such a man feels work to be no pleasure, and sighs for emancipation from its bondage and misery. Overwork we admit is bad, but that does not prove that no work is good. In this, as in many other cases, happiness is to be found in the medium between extremes. God has created us with a nature made for work, and whatever be our peculiar sphere of duty, our own happiness and that of society at large will be found in doing our work to the best of our ability. Do not say that this is not a topic for the Christian teacher, that religion has nothing to do with this. Religion has to do with everything that affects man's duty and happiness. It goes with us, or should go, to the shop, the plough, the anvil, and takes cognizance of what passes there; and the idle servant, the dawdling, trifling workman, the man who wastes his time and hangs listlessly over his work, sins against religion just

as certainly as the man who neglects prayer or seldom opens his Bible. Constituted as human nature and human society are, there is something holy, something divine in work. "My Father worketh hitherto," said Jesus, "and I work." Angels are happy beings, for they are working beings. They continually "do God's commandments, hearkening to the voice of his word." Civilization, progress, goodness, have spring from work. The world has reached its present height of intellectual and social greatness because it is a busy and working world. And as with society at large, so with individuals. Nobody in the world is so contemptible, next to the profligate man, as the mere idler; and between profligacy and idleness there is a close connection. A man who has nothing to do but enjoy himself, will never know what real enjoyment is. The hardest of all work is doing nothing. The mere man of pleasure, the hanger-on upon life who sets before him no duty, no distinct object and aim, no definite work, in short, is of all others the man who is least likely to extract true enjoyment out of life. If men are born without the necessity of toil, exempted from labour for daily bread, the true course for them -- that which wisdom, prudence, even selfishness, as well as Christian principle, points out -- is to devise some path of active duty, to consider what work they can do in God's world, and strenuously to set themselves to do it. For not only will we look back on our working hours with

greatest comfort, not only is it true that those parts of our lives which we remember with most pleasure are always the busiest parts of it, not only will relaxation and amusement be far sweeter and more intense after hard work, than if we spent our whole life in the pursuit of pleasure and amusement; but when the first difficulties of labour are over, and habit has smoothed away the roughness of oil, no man but will find that there is happiness in the very putting forth of his energies in some congenial sphere. Whether it be in the toil of the hand, or the trouble of the brain, the true joy of life is in working, with a sense of God and of duty upon us, as well and as hard as we can. No one who has tried it but must feel that in thorough and earnest occupation there is a buoyancy of spirit, a lightness of mind, an ease of troubles, an elasticity and animation diffused throughout a man's whole being, which the listless and idle can never know. The world is but a great field of duty, in which they who labour the hardest may not only reap the richest results, but in their very labouring rejoice the most.

But upon this point remark still further, that the comparison of the Christian's to the harvest joy may teach us that the Christian is one who does God's will because he loves it; or in other words, that the true motive to Christian obedience is not fear of punishment, or desire of reward, but love. If we are true Christians, the reason why we do our duty is not because we would escape hell or gain heaven,

but because we love to do it. A man may begin an outwardly religious life from inferior motives, and may indeed feel for many a day that to do one's duty, to avoid sin and obey God's will, is a hard and difficult task. Nor would we discourage any from attempting a life of duty because they feel no love to it. On the contrary, we would warmly encourage those who have been roused, from whatever cause, to serious thought, instantly to renounce their sinful and selfish ways, and to begin at once, however hard and irksome it may be, to try to please Christ, in the assurance that sooner or later duty will grow, first easy, then pleasant, then delightful, and at last that the service of Christ will become perfect freedom. When a man is learning a trade or profession, or beginning a new branch of study, the first attempts are almost always hard, blundering, uneasy efforts. The endeavour to construct or utter a sentence in a new tongue is invariably sad and rugged work. We cannot catch the right accent, the grammatical rules are laboriously followed, and a thousand niceties escape us. But we must not be discouraged; only persevere, and the difficulties will gradually vanish, the efforts will become less and less formal and elaborate, till at last, by dint of regular and constant practice, we will learn to talk and write with fluency, elegance, and ease. Or to take another case: when an artist first takes the pencil in hand, what sad work often does he make of it! Even in his

earliest efforts, indeed, there may be detected amid all the rude scratches some signs of incipient taste or genius. But the power of expression for long will be operose and feeble. Yet on he works; and with work and perseverance, the facility grows. The eye and hand become quicker, more delicate, more powerful, till by degrees the labour vanishes, the difficulties are forgotten, and at last there will come such a pleasure and fascination in the work, that it becomes the most delightful pursuit of life.

It is the same with the grandest of all pursuits, the service of God in Christ Jesus. Hard and stern and laborious at the first, yet to him who perseveres, in the strength of grace and in the consciousness of duty, it will infallibly grow light-some and easy in the end. Self-denial, temperance, purity, truthfulness, strict integrity in thought and word and deed, the giving up of our own ease and pleasure for the good of others and to please God; prayer, self-examination, the reading of God's word, realization of God's presence in the active duties and intercourses of life -- these duties may be difficult and severe to observe at first, may often impose on a man an almost intolerable yoke; so that in the weariness of effort and amid the heart-sickening sense of frequent failure, many a one may be, and has been, tempted at the very outset to abandon a religious life in despair. But if only, in reliance on the Holy Saviour's cheering promises, the attempt is persevered in, sooner or

later a sweet sense of freedom and ease in duty will begin to dawn on the soul. Love to Jesus will increase, and what we do for him will lose the feeling of hardness and effort. Spiritual employments will assume an attractiveness and gather around them a pleasure we knew not before, till by degrees we shall reach that condition in which the Psalmist's language will not be strange to our minds: "Oh, how love I thy law; it is my study all the day:" "My soul fainteth for the longing that it hath to thy judgments at all times:" "I have longed for thy salvation, O Lord, and thy law is my delight." In the daily round of duty such a man may come to feel free, happy, and rejoicing as a bird on the wing. What is hard to others will be to him "a yoke which is easy and a burden which is light." Obstacles and efforts that formerly seemed insuperable will yield before him as gently as the dungeon doors before the angel-guided apostle of old. A sweet sense of heavenly companionship and love will gather round his daily toils. He will go forth to his appointed duties with the light of holy love to cheer him, as when the reaper goes forth amid the bright beams and free air of the autumnal morn. In the fulness of his love and devotion to his Lord, he will feel that, amid all hardships and labours and even sufferings, there is for him a secret blessedness, and that beneath the eye of his heavenly Master it is given to him ever of "joy according to the joy in harvest."



III. Another obvious point of analogy between the joyful labours of the harvest-field and those of the Christian is, that they are in both cases the labours of those who *combine to help and cheer each other on in their work.*

Work, as everyone knows, is always more efficient, more hearty, more energetic when men combine and work together, than when each man works by himself. When men labour together they can divide the work better, and each take the place and do the portion of the work for which he is best adapted. When men work together, again, they can help each other, and two can often do together four, ten, twenty times the work of men working separately and apart. When men work together they not only help, but they cheer and instigate each other; sympathy brings out a new power of exertion, emulation quickens energy, the cheering voice of a brother sends new alacrity through the frame, and electric chain of fellow-feeling binds each to all the rest; in the sense of community, toil loses its irksomeness and fatigue is forgotten; a generous rivalry stimulates the powers, and the sluggish and indolent, stirred up by the example of the energetic, and ashamed to lag behind the rest, feel themselves possessed of energies and putting forth powers and performing feats that astonish themselves as much as others.

Now, so it is very strikingly in the two cases already referred to -- that of warfare, and that of husbandry. An

army is just a little community which each has his own place and station and work allotted to him, and in which all cheer and help each other on. It would not do for all to be generals, colonels, captains; there must be those who execute as well as those who devise and issue orders. It would not do for all to be infantry, or all to be cavalry. There is needed alike the steadiness and compactness of the one, and the more active and impetuous movements of the other. And so, when the hour of battle comes, all in their place, and all under strict command and discipline, they move rank and file, shoulder to shoulder, a vast assemblage, yet with the concentration and quickness of an individual will. The command is issued from the central authority, it flies from rank to rank, and from company to company; a common sympathy binds heart to heart and hand to hand, so that every heart beats high and every hand grasps the weapon with a firmer and steadier hold; in the sight of his fellows and with the memory of home and country rising in his soul, each feels the common impulse to brave all perils and do radiant deeds; and when the shout of battle rises, there is a tremendous power called forth by common action with which the mightiest individual and separate achievements could never cope.

Now turn for a moment to the more peaceful illustration, to that quieter scene which is not less graphically illustrative of the principle in question: for

where more vividly than on the harvest-field are you taught of the power of sympathy, combination, common action, and mutual helpfulness? Here is a little company each at his own work, and all cheering, encouraging, urging each other on. There is perhaps the farmer who superintends and watches the progress of the work; there are those who cut, and those who bind, and those who glean, and those who load the cart or lumbering wain and bear away the result of the common toil. And as the reapers nimbly ply the sickle, and each band or individual strains every nerve pushes on that he may not be surpassed by others, and as the cheering word, or shout, or merry song rises up in the clear bright air over the scene of blithe and busy toil, one perceives again a most striking proof of the increased power of common work and mutual helpfulness. Now so it is, or should be, in that noblest of all communities, bound together for the grandest of all works, -- the church of Christ, the company of Christ's true soldiers and faithful workmen on earth. Religion is not a solitary thing, a thing with which each man has to do exclusively in the hidden solitude of his own heart. It must begin there, and in many of its deepest exercises it must be carried on there; and without the private intercourse of the soul with God, the private discipline and governance of a man's own secret heart, all other religion would be vain. But, on the other hand, as little will it do to make religion altogether an individual and

secret thing. In many of its highest privileges, exercises, and engagements it is social; and one of its most momentous duties is that of mutual sympathy, encouragement, and helpfulness. If we are sincere Christians, we ought to feel that all we have and all we are, our wealth, time, talents, power, influence, our penitence, faith, virtue, Christian experience and wisdom, all our blessings and privileges temporal and spiritual, have been bestowed upon us, not for our own use alone, but for the common benefit of that holy family, that household and brotherhood of God's redeemed, to which we profess to belong. Our portion of meat God has given us not to hasten away and devour it, like a greedy child, in secret, but to share it with all our brethren in Christ. Our light was not kindled that it might be hidden for ever underground, illuminating only the walls of our own tomb-like solitude. We are to "let our light shine before men," and not only by our example, but by our active exertions and sympathies, we are bound to help on the work and workmen in Christ's church. No member of Christ's church but can do something to promote the cause of religion, and by his kindly aid, his visits of sympathy, his soothing charities, his cheering encouragements, his recountal of his own experience, be of some use to his fellow Christians. What a happy state of things would it be if each parish in our land were as the dwelling-place of a band of brothers enlisted in some noble and heaven-blessed

enterprise, fighting for home and country, in the cause of freedom, truth, and justice! What a happy scene would that be in which the wise and experienced were ever ready with their advice and aid to help the untried and ignorant, in which the powerful aided the weak, and the weak in turn were ready to bless, honour and stand true to the strong; in which by the head or by the hand, by endurance, forbearance, courage, zeal, self-devotion, all were ready to act together in the work of putting down sin and winning the world to Christ! What a parish that in which the scene that is now enacted on many a bright summer field were but a symbol and representation of our work in the nobler field of Christ's church; where from year to year all of us together, and each in his own place, were straining every nerve to be and to do good, to help and encourage each other in the work of the Lord, to prepare for the great harvest-home of eternity! Then, indeed, might our Sabbath song of praise be a prelude of that glorious song in which we all hope to join, in which the thousand times ten thousand voices, but one mighty heart of the redeemed in glory, shall celebrate the praises of the great Husbandman, affording the noblest, most glorious fulfilment of that text, "They joy before thee according to the joy in harvest."

JOHN CAIRD, D.D.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

“THEY WENT THROUGH A FIERY FURNACE.”

AFTER the death of good king Josiah, the kingdom of Judah came very soon to an end. His just and pious rule could not undo the evil wrought by the long bad reign of Manasseh, followed by that of wicked Amon; and the four kings that succeeded Josiah, three sons and one grandson of the good prince, did not walk in his ways. The time for God's fulfilment of his words of threatening by his prophets was now come. The people, high and low, were very corrupt, and the land groaned, as it were, under their sins. So, first of all, God brought the king of Egypt against them, and he laid a great fine on the country, and took their king away with him, putting his brother on the throne in his stead. Then came Nebuchadnezzar against this king, and took him bound to Babylon, and left his son in his place. He was but a boy, and he was king for only three months and ten days, when he had given such offence to Nebuchadnezzar that he sent an army against Jerusalem, and in the end went himself and conducted the siege of the place till he took it. The young king, with many others and

much spoil, he took away with him, and left his uncle, another of Josiah's sons, to reign in his room, making him swear by God to be a faithful subject of the great Babylonian empire. But Zedekiah the Jewish king did not keep his oath, and then came a great captain of Nebuchadnezzar's, and took Jerusalem again and laid it waste, and put out the king's eyes, and took him blind to Babylon, and carried away a multitude of captives, leaving only a very few persons in the whole land. But God did not forget his own people in the strange land. He showed them many mercies there, and it is of some of these I am now going to tell you a very remarkable story.

The great king of Babylon, though a very proud despot, who would have only his own will and did what he liked, was yet a wise and able man. So it was his plan when he conquered a county and took its chief men captive, to try and make them fond of his rule by raising the ablest among them to grand posts in his kingdom. When he took princes of Judah captive, he tried this plan. He bade an officer of state look out among the young princes and nobles of the wise, and have them educated with other youths for the king's service. This was, accordingly, done. Now, among the young persons chosen there were four whose Hebrew names were changed at the time, and they were called Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. They were all pious and excellent young men, fearing and loving

the God of their fathers. Their education was prospered by God; and when after a time they were examined by the king, he was pleased to find that they were very wise and learned indeed, so that none of the rest of the youths were at all like them. After this he was still more pleased to find that, when all his wise men were unable to tell him what a dream was which God had sent to him, and by which he was troubled the more that he had, quite forgot it in the morning, one of these four youths was able to tell him both the dream and the meaning of it. God had showed it to him in the night, in answer to his own and his companions' prayers. This one of the four is best known to us by his Hebrew name of Daniel, and there are other great stories about him in Babylon. But it is of the other three we are to read at present.

The Hebrew names of these three were Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; but we have come to think of them most as Shadrach, Mesach, and Abed-neo. After Daniel had pleased the king so much by explaining his dream to him, and had himself been promoted to a very high place, these three friends were set over the affairs of the province of Babylon at his request. This made the native great men very angry, and they watched for an opportunity to accuse them to the king. At last the occasion they were waiting for arose.



The proud king made a huge image all of gold, perhaps to represent his own great self; and setting it up in the plain of Dura -- a place in the province of which the three Hebrews had care -- he fixed a day for its dedication, and resolved to make it a grand time. He gathered together all the great officers of his whole kingdom, and brought them round about the golden image. He determined that at his word every one should bow the knee to it, and so do homage to himself. So he set in array a perfect host of musicians, with every kind of instrument, and made a decree that as soon as the sound of the loud music should burst forth, every person in the vast crowd should fall down before the golden statue, and worship it. I suppose the king meant to stand up himself, or remain seated on his throne, and enjoy the sight of so many great people falling down at his bidding. What a proud man he was when he saw the whole throng, as he thought, bow to the ground at once at the sound of the music! He seemed to feel as if he were indeed a god.

Almost all in the vast crowd did as the king had bidden. The decree had said that if any one did not obey, he should be thrown into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. That was enough for the many, even if they had objected to idol-worshipping. They knew where the furnace was blazing, and the dread of the king's wrath, or a wish to please him, made them bow the knee at once. But there

were three persons that wished to please a greater king, and did not care to think of what would become of them, if they disobeyed Nebuchadnezzar. They resolved to obey God, who had forbidden them, in the second of the ten commandments given at awful Sinai, to bow down to idols; they would do his will, and leave all the rest to him. So these three, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, stood straight up when all the others fell on their faces. Their enemies must have expected this, and were on the watch to see. So as soon as the great act of worship was over, they hastened to the king, and told him that the three Jews had defied his authority, and had not bowed the knee to the image he had set up. They did it in a way to make the king as angry as possible; and indeed, when he heard what they said, his rage rose to a perfect fury.

He sent for the three Hebrews at once; and as soon as they had come before him, he called out to them, Is this true that I hear of you? Do you refuse to obey me, and worship the image that I have set up? I will give you another chance for your lives. The music will sound again, and if then you fall down immediately on your faces -- well; but if not, ye shall go to the fire that hour. Then, thinking perhaps that they might be trusting in the Lord, he added very daringly, And where is the God that can save you? The three Hebrew youths gave the furious king a calm answer. They acknowledged that it was true that they had

not worshipped his image. As for his threats of the fire, they were not moved by them. They said that they knew the great God whom they served was able to deliver them from the burning furnace, and out of the king's hand. But in any case they would keep his commandment. These were their closing words: "Be it known to thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."

The king's face grew white hot with rage, to think that men could stand there, and calmly say that they would not do what he bade them. He cried out, Make the furnace seven times hotter than usual (not thinking, in his passion, how that would make death easier), and cast them into the midst of it. He told the mightiest officers of his army to attend to it, and see it done. So the three Hebrew children were bound in their dresses, just as they stood, and the officers took them up, and carried them to the mouth of the burning furnace. Now the flame was flashing out so fiercely that the men who carried them were scorched to death, as they went near, and heaved the three bound martyrs into the blazing fire. You might think they are sure to be burnt to death in an instant. But God was there, and their faith in him "quenched the violence of the fire." His promise was that day made good to the very letter, "When thou passest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle on thee."

The king had his seat placed where he could see the three men, with whom he was in such a rage, cast into the fire. I do not know whether he took much notice of the burning up of the persons who carried them, and flung them into the furnace. But he soon saw something which made him start up in great haste, and call out to those about him. He said, Did we not throw three men bound into the flames? what, then, is this I see? They are all walking in the fire free, and there is a fourth with them, and his form is like the son of God! He did not wait to hear much, but hasted to call loud to the three Hebrews to come out from the furnace. His rage was all gone now, lost in wonder at what he saw. At his call the three brave and good youths came forth, as as the people gathered round them, they were astonished to find that they were not only quite unhurt themselves, but that the smell of fire had not passed on their clothes. The only things about them that the flames had burned were the cords that bound them.

## QUESTIONS FROM THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Do you know where to find a phrase in the New Testament, which points out the ripeness of the season for some purpose and work of God?

2. Which of the prophets tells us about the Jews that were left in the land when their brethren were carried captive to Babylon?

3. What Hebrew youth, long before Daniel's time, rose high in the service of a foreign king?

4. What great king was it that prayed to God, and received a gracious answer in a dream of the night?

5. What king was it that saw a great image, in a dream, ground all to powder?

6. When was it that God made gracious mention of a number of persons who had refused to worship an idol?

7. Can you find words spoken by an apostle in the name of his brethren, showing that God's will is to be minded more than man's?

8. When did one brave man oppose a multitude of the worshippers of idols?

9. Where is the story of the three Hebrew youths alluded to in the New Testament?

10. When did bad men show their rage against one whom they hated, by gnashing their teeth together?

ANSWERS to the foregoing questions will be found by consulting the following chapters: --John xvii., and Gal. iv.; Jer. xl.; Gen. xli.; 1 Kings iii.; Dan. ii; 1 Kings xix.; Acts v.; 1 Kings xviii.; Heb. xi.; Acts vii.

-----

*Prayer.*

O GOD, we thank Thee that we have been taught the knowledge of Thyself the true God, and have not been left to bow down and worship stocks and stones and images made by men's hands. May we truly worship Thee. May all the world soon be brought to know Thee, from the least to the greatest. Teach us, O Lord, always to do Thy will without fear or flinching. Let us never be ashamed to acknowledge that we fear to offend Thee, and desire to please Thee. Let us be enabled always to do that which is right, without being afraid of consequences. Keep us from being overcome by our own passions. Teach us how to rule our own spirits. May Thy Spirit rule them, and Thy sweet peace keep them. And when at any time we are tried by severe affliction, may Jesus be with us in the furnace, and keep us from all real harm, and make us patient in the fire, and cause it to burn only our bonds of sin. This we ask for His own name's sake. *Amen.*

-----

## EVENING WORSHIP.

O LORD, we beseech Thee to keep Thy church and household continually in Thy true religion, and to stir up every member of the same to adorn their holy profession, by putting on bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, that, resting only upon the hope of Thy heavenly grace, and doing all in the name of our blessed Saviour, we may evermore be defended by Thy mighty power, giving thanks unto Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm lxxii.* 16-19.

LORD of the harvest, hear  
Thy needy servants cry;  
Answer thy people's earnest prayer,  
And all our wants supply.

On thee we humbly wait,

Our wants are in thy view;  
The harvest truly, Lord is great;  
The labourers are few.

Convert and send forth more  
Into thy church abroad;  
And let them speak thy word with power;  
Co-workers with their God.

O let them spread thy name;  
Their mission fully prove;  
Thy universal grace proclaim;  
Thine all-embracing love.

#### MATTHEW XXI. 1-27.

AND when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, 2. Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me. 3. And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them. 4. All this



was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet saying, 5. Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass. 6. And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them, 7. And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and thy set him thereon. 8. And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way. 9. And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest. 10. And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? 11. And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee. 12. And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast our all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves, 13. And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves. 14. And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them.

-----

*Prayer.*

O FATHER, Lord of heaven and earth, of whom, and through whom, and to whom, are all things, to Thee be glory for ever. We bless Thee for the unwearied and tender care which Thou takest of us and of all Thy creatures, supplying our ever returning wants, and giving us all things richly to enjoy. Thou visitest the earth and waterest it; Thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God; Thou blessest the springing thereof, and crownest the year with Thy goodness, filling our hearts with food and gladness. And, while we praise Thee for the kindness thus unceasingly manifested in providing for the wants of our bodies, we would especially acknowledge with warmest gratitude the great love wherewith Thou hast loved us, as displayed in the rich provision which, at infinite cost, Thou hast made for the wants of our spiritual and immortal nature. Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift! May the Father himself give us that true bread of life which cometh down from heaven, of which if a man eat he shall ever die.

May ours be the blessing promised to those who hunger and thirst after righteousness.

Thou hast given us to enjoy another sabbath, and to Thee we must yet render an account of the way in which we have spent it. Hide Thy face, O Lord, from all that Thou hast seen amiss in our services. Forbid that our seasons of grace should, through indifference and the moral perversity of our nature, be suffered by us to pass away unimproved; that we should thus cast Thy sayings behind our backs, and bring upon ourselves swift and sure destruction. May Thy word abide in us, and amidst the snares and temptations of a world lying in wickedness, and the seductive promptings of our own depraved and deceitful hearts, may Thy Spirit, through the word, enable us to keep our feet from every evil way, and to go on unto perfection.

In the spirit of the exercises of Thy holy day we would make supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings for all men: for kings and all that are in authority, that they who rule over men may be just, ruling in the fear of God; for subjects, that, submitting themselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, they may lead quiet and peaceable lives, in all godliness and honesty. Especially we pray for them who are of the household of faith. Stablish, strengthen, settle them, O Lord, and let Thy good Spirit perfect His own work in them. Have mercy upon those who, enjoying abundantly the means of grace,

say unto the Almighty, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways. Convince them by the power of Thy Spirit that they cannot set themselves against Thee and prosper, and subdue them to repentance and to the obedience of faith. Shine forth, O Shepherd of Israel, Thou that dwellest between the cherubim, and let Thy glory and Thy salvation appear to the unnumbered multitudes of our fellow-men who are yet shrouded in the gross darkness of heathenism. May He, who is the Light of the world, speedily bring them out of darkness, and break in sunder the bands in which they are held by the tyranny of the god of this world. May Jesus destroy the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations, that soon through all the tribes of earth it may be said, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation. Send, O Father, a gracious answer to these our humble prayers, for our Saviour's sake. *Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

*Morning.*

**Rejoice evermore.**

And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.

Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord.

1 Thess. v. 16. Col. iii. 15, 16, 17. Phil. iv. 4. 1 Chron. xvi. 10.

*Evening.*

**Pray without ceasing.**

In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.

I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.

O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.

When my soul fainted within me I remembered the Lord; and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple.

1 Thess. v. 17, 18.      Mat. xxvi. 41.      James v. 13.

Ps. xxxiv. 4, 8.      Jonah ii. 7.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Quench not the Spirit.**

Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing.

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,  
long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness,  
temperance.

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but  
the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things  
that are freely given to us of God.

1 Thess. v. 19. John iii. 5, 6. John vi. 63. Gal. v. 22, 23. 1 Cor. ii. 12.

*Evening.*

**Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.**

And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own  
business, and to work with your own hands, as we  
commanded you;

That ye may walk honestly toward them that are  
without.

In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works:  
in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,

Sound speech that cannot be condemned; that he that is  
of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing  
to say of you.

1 Thess. v. 21. 1 Thess. iv. 11, 12. Tit. ii. 7, 8.

**WEDNESDAY.**

*Morning.*

**Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.**

Put on the whole armour of god, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.

Eph. vi. 10, 11, 12, 13.      Phil. i. 27.

*Evening.*

**Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;**

And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;;

Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

That ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.  
Amen.



Eph. vi. 14, 15, 16, 17.    Col. iv. 12.    2 Cor. xiii. 14.

## THURSDAY.

### *Morning.*

**As it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.**

Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

Henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

1 Cor. ii. 9.    1 John iii. 2.    2 Tim. iv. 8.

### *Evening.*

**We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.**

For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to

make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

Heb. ii. 9, 10, 17.

## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.**

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;

And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.

Heb. iv. 14, 15.

Heb. v. 8, 9.

*Evening.*

**There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.**

For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.

Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

Heb. iv. 9, 10, 11.      Rev. xiv. 12. 13.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.**

And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new.

Rev. xxi. 1, 3, 4, 5.

*Evening.*

**And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.**

In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him;

And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.

And there shall be no night there.

Rev. xxii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

THIRTY-EIGHTH WEEK.

MORNING WORSHIP.

ALMIGHTY God, unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love Thee, and worthily magnify Thy holy name, through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm cxix.* 164-168.

COME to a desert place apart,  
And rest a little while;  
So spake the Lord, when limbs and heart  
Waxed faint and sick through toil.

High communing with God he sought;  
But, where He sought them, found  
The restless crowd together brought,  
And labour's weary round.

Then not a thought to self was given,  
Nor breathed He word of blame;  
He fed their souls with bread from heaven,  
Then stayed their sinking frame.

Turned He, when that long task was done,  
To sleep fatigue away?  
When on the desert sank the sun,  
The Saviour waked to pray.

O perfect Pattern from above!  
So strengthen us, that ne'er  
Prayer keep us back from works of love,  
Nor works of love from prayer.

## I. SAMUEL XII. 1-25.

AND Samuel said unto all Israel, behold, I have hearkened unto your voice in all that ye said unto me, and have made a king over you. 2. And now, behold, the king walketh before you: and I am old and gray-headed; and, behold, my sons are with you: and I have walked before you from my childhood unto this day. 3. Behold, here I am: witness against me before the Lord, and before his anointed; whose

ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it to you. 4. And they said, Thou has not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken ought of any man's hand. 5. And he said unto them, The Lord is witness against you, and his anointed is witness this day, that ye have not found ought in my hand. And they answered, He is witness. 6. And Samuel said unto the people, It is the Lord that advanced Moses and Aaron, and that brought your fathers up out of the land of Egypt. 7. Now therefore stand still, that I may reason with you before the Lord of all the righteous acts of the Lord, which he did to you and your fathers. 8. When Jacob was come into Egypt, and your fathers cried unto the Lord, then the Lord sent Moses and Aaron, which brought forth your fathers out of Egypt, and made them dwell in this place. 9. And when they forgot the Lord their God, he sold them into the land of Sisera, &c.

-----

## *Prayer.*

ALMIGHTY God, who in the beginning didst say, Let there be light, and there was light, shine, we pray Thee, into our hearts on this holy morning, and give us the knowledge of Thyself in the face of Jesus Christ. Scatter the clouds of unbelief, ungodliness, and sin; waken the ear, enlighten the eye, quicken the heart, of each of us; and grant us grace to bend all the energies of our souls to the work of confession and supplication, of thanksgiving and praise.

O God, we have sinned and rebelled against Thee; we have done amiss and gone astray. From time to time, yea, times without number, we have forgotten, we have forsaken, we have despised Thy commandment; we have brought upon ourselves the guilt or condemnation of a neglected gospel. O God, we are ashamed of ourselves; we are grieved and burdened with the remembrance of our transgressions; and we know that Thou art greater than our hearts, and seest many things in us which we have overlooked or forgotten. There is no health in us; we are full of sin, and without excuse.

O Lord, we bless Thy holy name for having taught us that Thy word is for sinners, and that thou art full of



compassion to those who humbly cast themselves on Thy forgiveness. We come to Thee, trusting not in our own righteousness, but in Thy manifold and great mercies. In the name of Jesus Christ, who is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, we ask of Thee pardon and peace; we ask the cleansing of the conscience, and the gift of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may rise from the death of sin to the life of righteousness. We bless Thee, O Father, we bless and glorify Thy unspeakable love and mercy, that Thou hast sent to us the word of reconciliation, even the message of a crucified and risen Saviour, in whom sinners may find rest and life for their souls. Give us grace to flee for refuge to this blessed hope, and to know for ourselves that the Lord is gracious. Grant that this day we may hear, with deep thankfulness, that life-giving voice which is able to save our souls. May the words of our lips and the meditations of our hearts, in Thy house this day, be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, our strength and our redeemer.

Vouchsafe, Lord, to Thy ministers the spirit of wisdom, that they may both convince the gainsayers, and awaken the thoughtless, and reclaim the wandering, and instruct the ignorant, and edify the faithful, according to Thy will, and according to the spiritual need of each. And do Thou, Almighty God, make the word powerful, by the alone efficacious aid of Thy blessed Spirit.

Be pleased, O Lord, this day to enlarge the borders of Thy true spiritual church at home and abroad. Suffer not the light of the pure gospel to be quenched or dimmed amongst us. Suffer not our sloth and unfaithfulness to prevail over Thy purpose of love towards us. Make the truth real and powerful in our own souls, that we may become Thy witnesses and Thy messengers, in humility and boldness, by word and deed, to others still sitting in darkness and the shadow of death.

We beseech Thee, O Father, to grant an abundant blessing to this household, and to all its present or absent members. If there be any one still a stranger to Thee, make Thyself known to him, we pray Thee, in Thy reality and in Thy love. Keep steadfast in Thy service all who have once entered it in will and devotion. Suffer not any lust of the flesh, or any allurements of the world, to mar or destroy Thy work once begun in us; but may we, day by day, so walk in the light of Thy truth, that we may at length attain to the light of everlasting life, see Thee as Thou art, dwell with Thee in Thy very presence, and be satisfied with Thy very love and with Thy likeness for ever, through Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom, with Thee and the Holy Ghost be all honour and glory, world without end. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O MERCIFUL God, who hast written Thy holy word for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of Thy holy scriptures, might have hope; give us a right understanding of ourselves, and of Thy warnings and promises, that we may neither cast away our confidence in Thee, nor place it anywhere but in Thee. Give us strength against all our temptations, and heal all our infirmities. Shut not up Thy tender mercies in displeasure, but lift up the light of Thy countenance upon us, and give us peace, through the merits and mediation of Thy most dearly beloved Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

### HYMN, *or Psalm* xxxvi. 5-9

I HEARD the voice of Jesus say,  
Come unto me and rest;  
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down  
Thy head upon my breast.  
I came to Jesus as I was,

Weary and worn and sad;  
I found in Him a resting-place,  
And He has made me glad.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,  
Behold I freely give  
The living water -- thirsty one,  
Stoop down, and drink, and live.  
I came to Jesus, and I drank  
Of that life-giving stream;  
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,  
And now I live in Him.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,  
I am this dark world's light;  
Look unto me, thy morn shall rise,  
And all thy day be bright.  
I came to Jesus, and I found  
In Him my Star, my Sun;  
And in that light of life I'll walk  
Till travelling days are done.

MARK IX. 14-37.

AND when he came to his disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them. 15. And straightway all the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed, and, running to him, saluted him. 16. And he asked the scribes, What question ye with them? 17. And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; 18. And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him; and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not. 19. He answereth him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? Bring him unto me. 20. And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed, foaming. 21. And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child. 22. And ofttimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us. 23. Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. 24. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. 25. When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and

deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. 26. And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead. 27. But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose. 28. And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out? 29. And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting. 30. And they departed thence, and passed through Galilee; and he would not that any man should know it. 31. For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day. 32. And they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him. 33. And he came to Capernaum: and being in the house, he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way? 34. But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves who should be the greatest. 35. And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and the servant of all, &c.

-----

## SERMON XXXVIII.

“BRING HIM UNTO ME.” -- Mark ix. 19.

IT has sometimes happened in military history that a defeat has been sustained, in the absence of a great general, by an army that he has a hundred times led to victory. There was that in his eye, in his voice, in his bearing -- there was that (to speak more truly) in his presence, in the man -- which unawares breathed spirit into his officers and confidence into his troops. The want of this presence just made the difference between success and failure. How or why they know not, the battle goes against them; and a bitter self-reproach, of which the chief ingredient is the expectation of his just displeasure, is the punishment of a discomfiture which may have cost them much both in life and honour. At that moment the well-known form re-appears; the man whom all trust heads them, sword in hand; the broken ranks reform themselves, the panic-stricken fugitives rally, the tide of fortune turns, and the lost day is won.

Thus was it on the occasion to which the text points.

The Captain of our salvation, Scripture calls Him so, had been for one night absent from His own. Three of His apostles He had taken with Him. On the holy mount, as St. Peter in his old age called it, the mount made holy by this one transaction, Jesus had been transfigured before the three. They had seen for one moment something of that which in heaven they shall see for ever, the glory of the resurrection body. They had seen the two great representatives of the law and the prophets coming back from the world of spirits to bear witness to Him of whom in life they had spoken, and to talk with him of his decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem. They had heard that voice which came to Him from the excellent glory, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Thus the prophetic word was made, as St. Peter says again, more sure to them; they saw it visibly confirmed by this glimpse of their Master's glory.

These were the privileged few: what of the rest? In their Master's absence a miserable demoniac boy was brought to them by his father. He had heard of dispossessions wrought by Jesus; he had come for the chance of some alleviation of his life-long wretchedness; and finding the Lord Himself absent he had applied to the nine disciples, beseeching them to compassionate and to help. But they could not. In earlier days, indeed, the third



chapter tells us, they had gone forth under Christ's express commission, not only to preach, but to heal sicknesses and to cast out devils. But now, taken by surprise, some of their number absent, and no express charge left with them, and Christ Himself away, their faith failed them, and they stood helpless and powerless in the face of this great emergency. "I spake to thy disciples," the poor father says afterwards in relating the occurrence, "that they should cast him out; but they could not." They can only stand and look upon it, accused and self-accusing for an impotence which was all want of faith.

At this moment of defeat and disgrace the Divine Leader unexpectedly shows himself. He comes back from the holy mount; there is a solemn pause of astonishment and awe. "The people," St. Mark says, "when they beheld Him" -- doubtless there was upon His very countenance, as of old upon the face of Moses, some trace of the glory of that night-long converse -- "the people, when they beheld Him, were greatly amazed." They gather around Him with an eager reverent greeting. A brief question places the exact situation before Him. One sound of sorrowful remonstrance falls from Him, "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you?" and then He calmly addresses himself to the painful task proposed, the casting out of the strong man armed from the fortress of a sin-bound and sin-ruined soul.

The narrative is full of beauty, nowhere so given as in the graphic narrative of this second Evangelist. Each verse, each clause, might suggest a sermon.

I. Notice, first, that unexpected question, “How long is it ago since this came unto him?” We might have said, The malady is too evident, the case is too pressing, for any preface or prelude: the child bound by Satan no sooner approaches than, in the very sight of Jesus, the spirit tears him, he falls on the ground, and wallows foaming: can there be any need of questioning? He who reads the hearts must know, nay, he sees the malady in its infallible signs. He does, and yet the father must tell it Him. A few moments delay is as nothing in the face of such a malady, and in the prospect of such a cure. And if a “miracle” is to be a “sign,” It is needful that they who stand by should fully apprehend the magnitude of the difficulty: and if a miracle is to be also a record, an example for all time, of Christ’s manner of working, it is needful that it should be wrought in order, not in precipitation; wrought as Christ would have us expect Him to work, and wrought as Christ would have us ourselves seek His working. “He asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him: And he said, Of a child. And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him.”

So it is still. When we kneel seriously before Jesus Christ for help his first answer to us is a question. *Tell me*

*all*: Is this some slight, some small, some recent trouble, to which thou wouldst have me minister? Thou speakest of *sins*. What sins? What hast thou done so much amiss? Has thou any besetting sin? any special root of bitterness within, sprouting and growing up into stalks and leaves and berries of poisonous speech and act? Look back upon the years, few or many, of thy past life, and tell me how long is it ago that this sin has held thee? My healing is a real healing, and I have no healing but for real sins. Is thine a real sin? Hast thou felt it, hast thou smarted under it, hast thou tried other remedies and found them fail, hast thou come to me because thou wantest me, because without me thou art wretched, and without me thou art lost?

There is in some of us a strange reluctance to this reality in prayer. We are frightened to see ourselves as we are. Just as some men would rather go about with an undiscovered, unascertained disease, even though it be incurable and mortal, than risk the physician's diagnosis which must go before the cure; even so it is in the things of the soul. "Miserable sinners" we can call ourselves without alarm, but when Christ stands and says to us, "*What* is thy sin, and how long ago is it since this came to thee?" then we shrink back and say, "What have I to do with Thee? Art Thou come to torment me before the time?"

Amongst the few here present are those of different ages and circumstances. But do we speak to any who has

not upon him some special disease? something which makes him absolutely require Christ? something which will be his death if he does not bring it to Christ? And O how reluctant we are to do this! how few are really honest, really thorough, in the self-confession! how few answer the heart searching question, when Christ, listening to their general prayer and taking it at its word, stands still, as it were, on his daily round of mercy, and says, *What* is thy malady? and how long ago is it since this came to thee?

II. Notice, again (we can take but a point here and there out of the story), the exact state of the man's faith as shown in his first answer -- "*If thou canst do anything*, have compassion on us, and help us." You may regard this as a first principle, as an axiom of the gospel, that it is better to come to Christ in any manner, than not to come. It is better to come to Christ in half belief -- it is better to come to Christ (if that were possible) in unbelief -- than not to come.

If you can say nothing else to Him, say this, which is here written for our learning -- this which has been the beginning of accepted prayer, the beginning of eternal life, to thousands and tens of thousands before you -- "*If Thou canst do anything*, have compassion on us, and help us."

"If Thou canst do anything." Christ loves sincerity. If a man will express to Him just the exact present state of his faith and of his hope; if he will but send forth after Him, as

into the distant heaven above, the cry which seeks and searches for Him as for hid treasure, even though it be mixed with much uncertainty and much misgiving, with many an “if” and many a “peradventure;” still He who breaks not the bruised reed nor quenches the smoking flax, will not altogether cast it out; the Desire of all Nations will read here the longing of a heart after Him; He will draw it out and draw it on by long-suffering grace, till he who came to supplicate shall stay to praise.

*“If Thou canst do anything.”*

There is a great difference between saying this *of* Jesus Christ and saying this *to* Him. As long as men can find it in their hearts to discuss and argue and conjecture about Him, what He is and who, without ever coming to Him, so long there is no faith. Thousands of persons wonder whether Christ can do anything, for one who speaks to Him and says, *“If Thou canst.”* There is no beginning of a distinctly Christian hope, until, like the father before us, we address ourselves to Christ Himself, and breathe our very doubts concerning Him into His own ear and heart.

Sometimes an intense anxiety for the help of Christ may diminish for the moment the confidence of its certainty. At a distance this man had heard of Christ’s power over evil spirits, and he came to Him. but now the very urgency of his need makes him speak doubtingly. He has come, and Christ can help; and yet, when he comes, he says, “If thou

canst.” So is it with us. It is an easy thing to talk of “our Saviour” while all goes well with us; it is not so easy to use Him as such when we have some on heart-sorrow, or some one soul-deep in sin, which we would bring for the actual touch of His healing and life-giving hand. Then “if” comes in; happy he who brings indeed his “if” with him, but yet comes.

III. Notice, once again -- it is a dialogue: we take two words from each speaker. Notice then the rejoinder of Jesus.

The man says, “If thou canst do anything.” Jesus takes the word from him, and replies, “If thou canst believe.” As though He would say this, The question is not what I can do, but what thou canst do. There is no limit to my power; but how is it with thy faith? “If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.”

The limit of Christ’s help is not the power of the Giver -- that is unbounded, infinite -- but the faith of the receiver. It is one of those half-repelling, half-encouraging answers, by which our Lord upon earth at once tried and strengthened the faith of those who sought Him.

“If thou canst believe.” Without faith Christ Himself can profit us nothing. Do we ask, Why not? Do we ask, as some have asked, Why did not Christ save first and we believe afterwards? This inquiry betrays a total ignorance of the nature of salvation. Salvation is not an excusing of

punishment, not a deliverance from eternal ruin, as an act of relief from the consequences of sin, the state of sin remaining unaltered: not this -- it is the communication of everlasting life, which is everlasting happiness, to a soul for ever dead without it. We may ask, as Christ Himself asked, How is it that we have no faith? how is it, that, with evidence so clear, experience so decisive, of the truth of Christ, of the power of the gospel, any man should live upon the earth hearing and disbelieving, hearing and trifling with, so great salvation? We may ask this, and the question is to be answered out of the condition of the heart and of the will, out of the dullness of the spiritual ear, and out of the inscrutable deceitfulness of sin. We may bow our heads before the mystery of evil, and humbly search -- humbly, yet vainly too -- into the strange marvel why it is that an Almighty God does not force, nor drive, nor compel, but only remonstrate, and entreat, and persuade; but one thing we cannot reasonably question, why does God not dispense with faith in those whom He is to bless and save -- why Christ should prefix this condition to the assertion of His own omnipotence, "If thou canst believe,: so, and not otherwise, "all things are possible." Faith is, in other words, the receptive will, the outstretched hand, which must take the gift, without which the gift would drop upon the ground, without which salvation itself would be none, the healed man would be still possessed, and heaven itself,

could it be entered, would be no heaven, would be hell, to its inmate! But O, remember -- remember jealously, whosoever would be saved -- what faith is. Faith, the condition of Christ's help, is not faith in myself, it is faith in Christ. It is not the being inwardly persuaded of His peculiar favour towards me; it is not faith in my own individual election to be an object of His saving love. This, where it is indeed given of God to any man, is a later grace than that of which Christ speaks here: it may be a comfort sometimes -- far on -- vouchsafed to the saint; it is never a condition imposed upon the sinner. "If thou canst believe." is not, If thou canst believe thine own election, but, If thou canst believe in Christ's power, then "all things are possible:" "all things are possible to him that believeth." No guilt is too heinous to be washed away: no sin too inveterate to be rooted out: no duty is too difficult to be done in Christ's strength: no obstacle is too great to be rolled away by His Providence. No grace, however opposite to nature, is unattainable by prayer and watching: and no enterprise, however disproportioned to the ability of man, is impossible or desperate to the might of grace. The very devils within believe and tremble; the demoniac himself, if he will only kneel before Christ, shall be seen ere long sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind!

IV. Notice, fourthly, in the last words of the man, the progress towards perfection of this grace of faith. We saw



the beginning of it; we saw Christ's treatment of its elementary state; we shall not see it perfected. Neither here in this narrative, nor yet in human life anywhere, is it given to us to see this. Progress, not perfection; effort, not victory; the cross, not the crown; is the attainment here of the fallen -- the infallible sign below of Christ's redeemed. Straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe: help thou mine unbelief." Lord, I believe, -- yes, or I were not here: if I did not believe, I should not be kneeling before Thee -- I should be sitting in the gloom of my harrassed tortured home, watching in hopeless anguish a frenzy which I could neither bear nor soothe. And yet, now that I am come -- come, because I believe -- come, because I hope, because I know, that even this malady is not beyond the reach of this one Physician -- I feel within myself, too, the workings of an opposite thought, Lord, I believe: help Thou mine unbelief." I shall stay, I shall kneel on, I shall cry out to Thee with tears -- if I must disbelieve, it shall be in Thy presence, it shall be as Thy suppliant, it shall be against my will, against my judgment, against my true self within. I believe, and therefore I came; I believe, and therefore I kneel; I believe, and therefore my very unbelief must be made to pray; faith shall drag unbelief with it to Thy footstool, arraign it there, and pray Thee to judge it, and to condemn it, and to execute

it, nailing it to Thy cross -- “Lord, I believe: help thou mine unbelief.”

Let no man say that he is what he is not. Let no man say that he has faith when he has none; let no man say that faith is strong in him when it is weak. **Christ loves not the untruthful man**; He would have each man know himself, see himself, and describe himself, as he is. But do this. Bring your unbelief with you (if it must be so) to Christ. Make it kneel down -- make it pray. Then it will have lost its sting! Then you yourself -- you, the real “I” of the will and of the being -- are on the same side with Christ in the conflict within, and you can appeal to Him, as the Author and Finisher of our faith, to cast out of you this lingering, this obstinate, this oft-rebelling foe. You can say, “Lord I believe,” or I should not thus seek Thee: “help Thou mine unbelief;” for it is as much Thine enemy as it is mine. Reveal Thyself to me in Thy love and in Thy power, and then faith will prevail. “Show me some token for good, that this thing which hates me may see it, and be ashamed!” Lift up the light of Thy countenance upon me, and so all shall be peace -- peace now, from a wavering, divided, warring mind; peace at the last, from temptation and conflict, from doubt and sin! -- C. J. VAUGHAN, D.D.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

HOW A GREAT KING CAME TO EAT GRASS LIKE A BEAST.

A LONG time ago, far away in the East, there lived a great king, with a very long name. He had a grand palace, and the city where the palace stood was wonderfully spacious and splendid. Its streets, its gardens, its walls, were such as were not to be seen anywhere else. The king had been a great warrior, and fought against a number of nations, had taken many cities, and brought their spoils to his own capital. He had laid out vast sums of money in adorning and beautifying it, and was extremely proud of its grandeur. But he was a bad king to his subjects. He was careless of poor people's state; he oppressed and wronged them for his own ends; he was a selfish tyrant. He was very fond of flattery, and hot and hasty in his passions as fire. I have told you already how he cast three captive Jews into a blazing furnace because they would not worship the golden

image he had set up in the plains of Dura. Even before I said this, I think you knew that I was speaking Nebuchadnezzar. I have another very strange story to tell you about that king.

Nebuchadnezzar was full of wonder, as we saw, at the escape of the three Hebrew friends from the death by fire to which his rage had doomed them. He felt that the God whom they feared was far stronger than he was, with all his pride and power. He was convinced that he must be God indeed. So, while the fit of wonder was on him, he made a decree that all the people of his great realm should respect the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego; and that anyone who should dare to speak against him should himself be slain, and his house made a heap of ruins. He said there was no other God that could deliver in the manner in which the God of the Jews had saved his servants. Yet he did not himself serve him. He went on in his bad proud ways, after a time, the same as before. He needed another and severer lesson, and he tells us in his own words how he was first warned of the coming stroke, and then how it fell. The story is given in a letter sent to all his people, and it makes a very striking sermon on the words with which it closes -- "Those that walk in pride God is able to abase."

In this sermon the king says he was very prosperous, and quite at ease in his grand palace. All his foes had been subdued. Every thing went well with him. He thought

there was no one so great and happy as himself. But one night he had a dream that troubled him. He thought he saw a great tree, growing in the midst of a wide field. Its top towered up to the very sky, and its branches spread out on every side, as if they would reach the very bounds of the land. Its leaves were freshly green and beautiful to look on, and rich fruits hung among them in great abundance. The birds of the air flocked to lodge in its boughs, and peck its fruit, and the beasts of the field came and lay under its broad shade. As the king in his dream looked at it, he thought he had never seen so fine and grand a tree. But just as he was admiring it, he saw one come down out of the sky, and heard him say with a loud voice, "Hew down the tree; cut off its branches; throw its leaves to the winds, scatter its fruits; let the birds fly away from it; let the beasts go from under it; leave nothing but a stump of it in the earth." The voice went on to say "Yet let the stump remain -- let the dew of heaven come down on it for seven years; and let it lie among the grass. The Holy Ones, who watch men from the sky, say that it must and shall be so, in order that all the world may know that the Most High rules in the earth." Such was the voice that the king heard about the tree that he saw in his dream. He does not tell us whether he saw the thing done; perhaps he did, and woke up with what seemed the crash of the falling tree. At all events, when he rose from sleep and remembered his dream,

he was very much struck with it, and wished eagerly to know what it meant. So he sent for his wise men, and told them what he had dreamed; but there was no one among them that could guess at its meaning. At last the king called for Daniel and, using his Chaldean name, said, O Belteshazzar, I know you have the spirit of the holy gods in you; hear what I have dreamed last night, and explain the vision to me. None of my musicians can tell me, but I am sure you can. Then he related his dream to him. Daniel heard it with pain and wonder, and he was not able to speak a word for an hour, he was so distressed about the matter. The king saw that he was vexed, and bade him not to fear to speak out the truth. He went on, then, to tell the meaning of the dream, but began by wishing that it might be applied, not to the sovereign himself, but to his enemies. This however, he said was the meaning: -- The dream was a warning from God. The great tree was Nebuchadnezzar, whom God had prospered till he had grown very great and strong, spreading his power, like the tree's shadow over the plain, all round the world. The cry of the Holy One from heaven, to cut it down and leave only the stump among the dewy grass, was God's voice telling the king that the kingdom would be taken from him, and that he himself would be driven out to the fields, and would lie down among the cattle, and eat grass as they did, with a beast's tastes, and a beast's heart. This was to last long enough to teach

the king his pride and folly, and to show him that there was a far higher King than himself, who ruled over all men, and gave power and thrones such as he pleased. But as the stump remained in the ground, so Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom was to be kept for him, after he came to know that God was king of kings. When Daniel had told thus the meaning of the dream, he went on to say that it had come for a warning, and he prayed the king to take heed to it, and to his great empire, and be kind to the poor; perhaps God would give him longer peace, or turn from his anger.

The king did not take the prophet's good advice, and all the things foreshown to him in his dream happened exactly as they were foretold. About twelve months from that time he was walking on a terrace in his palace, from which he could see a great part of the city round about him, and his heart began to swell with proud thoughts, as he said aloud to himself -- Is not this great Babylon, and have not I built it? Have not I made it for my honour and glory by the might of my power? Who ever could do anything so grand? Just as the vain word of boast was in his mouth, a voice called out to him from the sky, saying, O Nebuchadnezzar, this word is for you; your kingdom is gone from you; you will be driven to the fields, and eat grass like the cattle, for seven years, till you know that God reigns. All this happened now at once. That very hour the king became mad; he had a beast's heart given him, was chased

away from the homes of men, and lay and ate among the oxen, till his hairs grew long like eagles' feathers and his nails like the claws of birds. Many a shower wet him, and many a night's dew. Yet he was preserved in life, and what was still more wonderful, no one was allowed to take his throne. God kept it waiting for him, for he had mercy in store for him. No doubt, good Daniel helped to keep all things quiet and right, till the day should come for God to bring the king back.

It came at length: the Bible says, "after seven times," and I have called these seven years. Perhaps, however, it was not quite so long. Perhaps the seven times were shorter periods. Be this as it may, the hour of mercy came. One day the king rose up from his crawling posture, gave up going on all-fours, stood on his feet and looked up at the sun, felt that his reason had come back, and returned to his palace. You may be sure he soon had his shaggy body washed and trimmed and dressed. Then his old servants and nobles came about him, and bade him welcome back to his throne, and were eager to serve him as before. His kingdom prospered after that as much as ever, and the honour of the king shone out again, like the sun after a dark storm or an eclipse, as bright as before.

God did more than all this, I think, for King Nebuchadnezzar. He not only gave him a man's heart again, but a new heart. For he was at pains to tell all men



about what the Lord had done to him, and in the end of his letter to his people he says, that when his understanding came back to him he blessed the Most High, and praised and honoured Him who liveth for ever and ever. His closing words are these, “Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment; and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.” So it seems that we may safely conclude, that he who once lay among the beasts now sings among the angels.

-----

### QUESTIONS FROM THE BIBLE STORY.

1. What two psalms, almost in the same words, contrast the living God with idols that are no gods?
2. Who was it that proudly and blasphemously likened the living God of Israel to the gods of other nations, and defied him to deliver his people?
3. What great king, before the time of Nebuchadnezzar, was ten times warned of God before his destruction came?

4. What very prosperous person, who thought himself a happy man, is spoken of in the Gospels as called to meet sudden death?

5. Where is Jesus represented as a spreading and fruitful tree, giving refreshment to his people?

6. On what three great occasions did a voice from heaven speak to Jesus, not in warning, but in witness?

7. What king was it to whom his servants on one occasion were afraid to tell the truth about a trial that had befallen him?

8. What Jewish king was changed from a cruel tyrant to a just and holy man, being taken far away from his kingdom, while his throne was kept for him?

9. What king turned away God's anger from his people and himself by timely repentance?

10. Who was it that in dreadful madness staid, not among the beasts, but in the midst of the dead?

11. What signs of seven years were once seen by a great man in a dream?

12. Who was it that saw a time of double prosperity, after a period of terrible affliction?

13. Can you give an instance in which Jesus gave both bodily and spiritual blessings to one whom he healed.

ANSWERS to these questions will be readily found by turning to the following chapters: -- Ps. cxv. and cxxxv.; Isa. xxxvi., Exod. vii. and xii.;

Luke xii.; Song ii.; Matt. iii., Luke ix., and John xii.; 2 Sam. xii.;  
2 Chron. xxxiii.; Jonah iii.; Mark v.; Gen. xli.; Job xlii.; John ix.

-----

*Prayer.*

O GOD we thank Thee for giving us more understanding than the birds of the air, and the beasts of the field. Help us to serve Thee with the powers of mind which Thou hast given to us. We thank Thee for preserving us in sound reason, and we pray for all who have lost this precious gift. We thank Thee that so much is now done to make such persons comfortable and beseech Thy blessing on all the officers of asylums for the insane, in their kind and difficult work. We beseech Thee to keep us from pride in strength, or beauty, or wealth, or rank. Thou, O Lord, art great; all creatures are little and as nothing before Thee. Thou givest us all good things that we enjoy. Let us praise Thee for all; and most for Jesus Christ our Saviour, to whom, with Thee and Holy Spirit, be glory for ever. *Amen.*

-----

## EVENING WORSHIP.

O ALMIGHTY God, whom to truly to know is everlasting life, grant us perfectly to know Thy Son Jesus Christ to be the way, the truth, and the life; that, following the steps of Thy blessed saints, we may steadfastly walk in the way that leadeth to eternal life, through the same Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* lxii. 5-8.

My God, my Father, while I stray  
Far from my home, on life's rough way,  
O teach me from my heart to say,  
Thy will be done!

If Thou shouldst call me to resign  
What most I prize, it ne'er was mine;

I only yield Thee what was Thine,  
Thy will be done!

Should grief or sickness wear away  
My life in premature decay,  
My Father! still I live to say,  
Thy will be done!

If but my fainting heart be blest  
With thy sweet Spirit for its guest,  
My God! to Thee I leave the rest,  
Thy will be done!

Renew my will from day to day;  
Blend it with Thine, and take away  
All that now makes it hard to say,  
Thy will be done!

Then, when on earth I breathe no more  
The prayer, oft mixed with tears before,  
I'll sing upon a happier shore,  
Thy will be done!

MATTHEW XVIII. 1-14.

AT the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? 2. And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, 3. And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. 4. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself, as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. 5. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. 6. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it would be better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. 7. Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh! 8. Wherefore, if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands, or two feet, to be cast into everlasting fire. 9. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell-fire. 10. Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones: for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven. 11. For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost. 12. How think

ye? If a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine which went not astray. 13. And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray. 14. Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.

### MATTHEW XX. 17-28.

AND Jesus, going up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them, 18. Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, 19. And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again. 20. Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him. 21. And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom, &c.

*Prayer.*

O FATHER of mercies, the close of day brings us again to Thy footstool. We cannot lay us down to sleep without Thy blessing: O grant it to us, of Thy great goodness, and watch over us, in pity and in love, through the hours of sleep and darkness.

Almighty God, even Thy holy day brings with it no exemption from infirmity and temptation. Even in Thy house of prayer our thoughts have wandered, and our holy things themselves have been stained with many defilements of sin. Have mercy upon us, and grant that our great High Priest may so bear away these our transgressions that Thy face may be hidden from them, and that we may stand before Thee, in Him and in His righteousness, without spot and blameless.

Vouchsafe, Lord, Thy blessing to the words which have been spoken in Thy name, this day by the ministers of the sanctuary. Suffer not the good seed to be caught away out of our hearts by the fraud and malice of the devil, or choked within us by our own negligence and worldliness. Cause it to take deep root, and in Thine own good time to spring up and bear fruit in us, to Thy glory and to our everlasting good.

Give us a deeper knowledge of the state of our hearts and souls, as in the sight of Him from whom no secrets are



hid. Make us more earnest to grow in grace. Give us no rest, O God, in our sins; but make us willing to take up the cross, mortifying the flesh with its sinful passions and lusts, and living here below a life of faith in the Son of God, who loved us and gave Himself for us.

Open our eyes, O Lord, that we may see the wondrous things of Thy law. May we enter more seriously, and with a wiser understanding, into the mysteries of Thy grace as they are unfolded to us in the gospel of Thy Son. Grant that we may never rest in that whereunto we have attained, but be ever pressing forward to that ripeness of knowledge and obedience which becomes the disciples and servants of the holy and divine Master.

If any have this day wilfully forsaken the assembly of Thy people, touch their hearts, we beseech Thee, with the compunctions of the Holy Spirit, and make them feel the ingratitude of despising so great salvation. Have mercy on all those who are walking in the way of their own hearts, and so fetch them home, blessed Lord, to thy flock, that they may see the felicity of Thy chosen, rejoice in the gladness of hy people, and give thanks with Thine inheritance.

Into Thy hands, O Lord, who neither slumberest nor sleepest, we now commit ourselves; beseeching Thee so to bless our sleep to us that it may fit us for a more earnest and faithful service, and be to us a foretaste of that blessed

rest which is the paradise of Thy saints, and from which Thou wilt call them to a glorious resurrection at the appearing of the Lord and Saviour, who, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

*Morning.*

**And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard.**

And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and breakdown the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down.

And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned nor digged; but there shall come up briers and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.

For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he

looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.

Isa. v. 3, 5, 6, 7.

*Evening.*

**He spake also this parable: A certain man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard: and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none.**

Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three year I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?

And he, answering, said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it;

And if it bear fruit, well; and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.

And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

Luke xiii. 6, 7, 8, 9. Matt. iii. 10.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**And great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and**

**many others, and cast them down a Jesus' feet; and he healed them.**

For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.

And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

Matt. xv. 30. John v. 21. John vi. 39.

*Evening.*

**And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.**

For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.

And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

Matt.xv. 30. John v. 21. John vi. 39.

## **WEDNESDAY.**

*Morning.*

**Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.**

Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken and the other left.

Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

Watch, therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.

Rev. xvi. 15.     Matt. xxiv. 40, 41. 42. 43.

*Evening.*

**For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;**

And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is Son of man.

Then answered Peter, and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?

And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me in the regeneration, when the

Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

John v. 26, 27. Matt. xix. 27, 28.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept.**

For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

1 Cor. xv. 20, 22, 56, 57, 58.

*Evening.*

**For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.**

For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.

But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you:

To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Rom. xiv. 8, 9.      1 Peter v. 10, 11.

## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts.**

He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.

Evil pursueth sinners: but to the righteous good shall be repaid.

But ye, brethren, be not weary in well-doing.

And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have company with him, that he may be ashamed.

Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

Ps. cxix. 63.      Prov. xiii. 20.      2 Thess. iii. 13, 14. 15.

*Evening.*

**By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments.**

Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God: for it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.

Therefore let no man glory in men: for all things are yours.

1 John v. 2.      James iv. 4.      1 Cor. iii. 19, 20, 21.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.**

For the good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do.

Now, if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.



O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Rom. vii. 18, 19, 20, 21, 24, 25.

*Evening.*

**God will render to every man according to his deeds:**

To them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life.

Study to shew thyself approved unto God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

My brethren count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations:

Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

Rom. ii. 6, 7.    2 Tim. ii. 15.    2 Tim. iii. 17.    James i. 2, 3, 4.

# HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

## THIRTY-NINTH WEEK.

### MORNING WORSHIP.

MOST holy and most merciful God, We bow before Thy throne with wonder and devout fear, with thankfulness and great joy. We bless Thee that, although we have sinned against Thee, Thou art near to us still. We are continually breaking Thy commandments, but Thy compassions fail not, and Thy mercy endureth for ever. Forgive all our transgressions. Purify our hearts by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. While we are reading Thy word, may we have Thine own teaching. All the day may we abide in Thee, O God. Hear us for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* xxv. 9, 10--14, 15.

O HEIGHT that doth all height excel,  
Where the Almighty doth abide!  
O awful depth unsearchable,  
Wherein the Eternal One doth hide.

O dreadful glory that doth make  
Thick darkness round the heavenly throne,  
Through which no angel-eye may break,  
Wherein the Lord doth dwell alone!

Our fainting souls the quest give o'er,  
Their weary wings no longer try:  
His dwelling we may not explore,  
We may not on his glory pry.

Vain searchers! but we need not mourn:  
We need not stretch our weary wings;  
Thou meetest us where'er we turn;  
Thou beamest, Lord, from all bright things.

The glory no man may abide  
Doth visit us, a gracious guest;  
Thou, whom "excess of light" doth hide,  
Here shinest, sweetly manifest.

To us vain searchers after God,  
To us thy Holy Ghost doth come;  
From us thou hidest thine abode;  
But thou wilt make our souls thy home.

O glory that no eye may bear!  
O presence bright, our souls' sweet guest!  
O farthest off, O ever near!  
Most hidden and most manifest!

## I. SAMUEL XVII. 4-11, 32-51.

AND there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. 5. And he had an helmet of brass upon his head; and he was armed with a coat of mail; and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of brass. 6. And he had greaves of brass upon his legs, and a target of brass between his shoulders. 7. And the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam; and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron: and one bearing a shield went before him. 8. And he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel, and said unto them, Why are ye come out to set your battle in array? Am not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul? choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me. 9. If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants: but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us. 10. And the Philistine said, I defy the armies of Israel this day;

give me a man, that we may fight together. 11. When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed, and greatly afraid. 32. And David said to Saul, Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine. 33. And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth. 34. And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock; 35. And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. 36. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God. 37. David said moreover, The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and the Lord be with thee. 38. And Saul armed David with his armour, and he put an helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail. 39. And David girded his sword upon his armour, and he assayed to go; for he had not proved it. And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them. And David put them off him. 40. And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of

the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, even in a scrip; and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine. 41. And the Philistine came on and drew near unto David; and the man that bare the shield went before him. 42. And when the Philistine came on and drew near unto David, he disdained him: for he was but a youth, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance. 43. And the Philistine said unto David, Am I dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. 44. And the Philistine said to David, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field, 45. Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. 46. This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcases of the host of the Philistine this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. 47. And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with the sword and spear: for the battle is the Lord's and he will give you into our hands. 48. And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hasted, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. 49. And David put his hand in his

bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth. 50. So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; but there was no sword in the hand of David. 51. Therefore David ran, and stood upon the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith. And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they fled.

*Prayer.*

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, we give Thee thanks for Thy great and wonderful goodness to us and to all men. We thank Thee for all the blessings with which Thy bountiful hand enriches our life in this present world -- for the joy of childhood, for the strength of manhood, and for the calmness and peace of old age. We thank Thee for the work of the week, and for the rest of this holy day. We thank Thee for the sleep of the night, and for the new vigour of the morning. We thank Thee for the quietness of our home, and for the friends who love us. We thank Thee that Thou hast not permitted the want, the shame, and the misery to come upon us, by which our hearts might have been broken, and our lives made desolate. Thou art good,

and Thou doest good. We thank Thee with heart and soul, and strength, for all Thy love.

And yet, O God, we have sinned against Thee. In Thy presence is fullness of joy, but we have not loved Thee well enough to stay there. It is in Thy heart to lead us into green pastures, and beside still waters but we have erred and strayed like lost sheep. Have mercy upon us, O Lord, according to Thy loving-kindness, and according to the multitude of Thy tender mercies, blot out all our transgressions. Forgive us all the harsh and hasty words we have spoken during the week which has gone by; and all our unkind and ungenerous and suspicious thoughts. Forgive us if we have been guilty of any injustice and untruthfulness -- if we have flattered the rich, and oppressed the poor. Forgive us if, through our coldness and selfishness, we have clouded the happiness, or increased the sorrow, of any of our relatives and friends. Forgive us if we have not wept with them that weep, and rejoiced with them that do rejoice. Forgive us if we have been envious of the prosperity of other men, or treated them hardly because of their misfortunes. Forgive us if we have so forgotten Thyself, that our chief anxiety has been to increase our wealth, and to win the good opinion of men. Forgive us that we are often so restless and impatient in times of trouble, and that in times of joy we are so ungrateful to Thee for Thy goodness. Forgive us that we do not hate sin



more, and love Thee better. Forgive us that we resist and grieve Thy Spirit. May we have redemption through the blood of Christ, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of Thy grace. From Thine own lips, O God, may we now receive absolution from all our sins.

We come to Thee, O God, to save us: we cannot save ourselves. Thou alone canst forgive us; forgive us for Christ's sake. Thou alone canst deliver us from the power of sin; for Christ's sake deliver us. How often have we resolved to keep Thy commandments, but our strongest resolutions have been soon broken. How often have we vowed to be for ever faithful to Thee, but our most solemn vows have been soon forgotten. We entreat Thee to reveal in us now the exceeding greatness of Thy power so shall we please Thee perfectly in all things.

Be with us all this day. The day is Thine, O God; we are free from common work and common care; come near to us, and may we behold Thy glory. Too often the day of rest has passed by, and we have had no bright and blessed vision of Thy face; nor have we come to know Thee better, whom to know is eternal life. In Thy great goodness, suffer not the hours of this day to remain unblessed.

We entreat Thee to reveal Thyself to-day to all whom we love. If any of those who are dear to us are living far away from Thee, awaken within them, in answer to our present intercessions, very sad and troubled thoughts about

their guilt and their peril; and may they be cut to the heart by the remembrance of Thy love which they have forgotten. And to all our friends who are trying to keep Thy commandments, grant a deeper peace, and a richer joy, and a larger wisdom. May the glory of heaven shine round them; and may they find perfect blessedness in Thine infinite love.

Grant wisdom, and courage, and tenderness, and great zeal, to all Christian ministers this day, and to all good men and women who shall try to bring the world nearer to Christ. May He who died for the sins of the world have cause to rejoice to-day over great numbers of the penitent souls, who shall ask Him for the first time to grant them forgiveness and eternal life.

Hear us, O God, in all these our confessions, prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings, for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

ALMIGHTY God, we thank Thee for all that Thou hast revealed of Thyself to mankind in past ages, through prophets and apostles, and through Jesus Christ or Lord; but we, too, are Thy children, and we entreat Thee now to speak to us. May we be taught of the Holy Ghost; and may the truth that He shall reveal to us be hidden in our hearts, that we may not sin against Thee; for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* civ. 31-35.

MY God, I do not flee from thee  
Because thou awful art;  
Thy glories, Lord, oppress not me,  
Nor make afraid my heart.

Father, Redeemer, Quickener, mine,  
What joy they glories yield!  
That majesty, that might of thine,  
I count my sun and shield.

Who but thyself, all-glorious guest,  
Joy to my sad soul brings?  
And where may thy frail creatures rest  
But 'neath the Eternal wings?

I tremble, and thou make'st me bold  
I weep; smiles come from thee:  
I faint, and thy strong arms enfold:  
I die; thou quickenest me.

My weakness thy dear succour gains;  
That weakness, Lord, I love:  
Yes, sweet the frailty that constrains  
My soul to look above!

O if I find mine earthly rest  
In thee my glorious God,  
How will thy glory make me blest  
In thine own bright abode!

## II. THESSALONIANS I. 1-12.

PAUL, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians, in God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ: 2. Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. 3. We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth. 4. So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God, for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure: 5. Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer: 6. Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; 7. And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, 8. In flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; 9. Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; 10. When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed), in that day. 11. Wherefore also we pray always for you, that

our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power: 12. That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

### JOHN XVII. 17-23.

SANCTIFY them through thy truth; thy word is truth. 18. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. 19. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. 20. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; 21. That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. 22. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: 23. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me.

-----

## SERMON XXXIX.

“THAT THE NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST  
MAY BE GLORIFIED IN YOU.”  
-- 2 Thess. i. 12.

THIS prayer rests upon a truth, the practical importance of which, in relation to the culture and growth of the Christian life, can hardly be exaggerated. In the verses immediately preceding the text, the apostle has been speaking of the final revelation of the majesty and power of our Lord, when he “shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.” He will come, not only to punish the wicked, “with everlasting destruction,” but “to be glorified in his saints.” In the holiness, the dignity, the strength, and the blessedness of all who have loved him and kept his commandments, Christ will then reveal the depth and fulness of his love for our race, and the true magnitude of his work, in effecting human redemption. In that day Christ is not to shine in solitary splendour, or to reign on a solitary throne. We are not to look upon him merely as Peter and James and John looked upon him in the moment of his transfiguration, with wonder and with joy, but having no share in the glory. We too are to be transfigured, and

seeing him as he is we are to be “like him.” He is to be a King among kings, and a Priest among priests. The meaning of those words in his last prayer will be made plain, “The glory which thou hast given me I have given them.” As the malignity of our sin was manifested in the suffering and shame it brought upon Christ, so the intensity and energy of his love will be manifested in the holiness and bliss to which it has exalted us. He will be “glorified in his saints.”

Earlier still in the chapter the apostle had said, “We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, because that your *faith* groweth exceedingly, and the *charity* of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;” and now he prays that God would perfect both their faith and their love. We “*thank* God always,” for what you have already attained ; we “*pray* God always,” that our God would “fulfil every good pleasure of goodness and the work of faith in power;” that is, that he would make all their kindness and affection for each other more fervent and active still, and their faith in himself more vigorous. Christ will come to be “glorified in his saints;” therefore we pray that God will perfect your Christian love and perfect your Christian faith, “that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may, in that day, “be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.” This prayer implies that the measure of our Christian excellence, in this world,



will determine the measure in which Christ will be glorified in us in the next. The greater our holiness now, the more fully will the glory of Christ be revealed in us hereafter.

This is the plain and direct meaning of the text. But we may be permitted to turn aside from the vast and sublime subject to which the text naturally directs us, to a humbler and quieter region of thought. What the text teaches us, is that our present life and character will determine the extent to which Christ will be glorified in us in the world to come, and especially in the last day; it is equally true, and indeed it is only an inferior exemplification of the same law, that our present life and character determine the extent to which Christ is glorified in us in this present world.

I. Nor is it our life and character merely by which Christ may be dishonored or disgraced. We know, said Nicodemus, that thou art a teacher sent from God; and while we believe that Christ was infinitely more than this, we too believe that he came to reveal to us the highest moral and spiritual truths. We are his disciples; that is, we are people who profess to accept his word as authoritative, and to regulate our religious thoughts by his teaching. We dishonour him if, through intellectual indolence, we permit ourselves to have only vague and indefinite conceptions of the truths he really taught, or if we hold our religious convictions with a weak and trembling hand. If Christ is a teacher and we are his scholars, it is plainly our duty to

learn all he has told us about God and ourselves, and to grasp it with a firm faith. In this age of restless doubt, when so many persons think that a strong and settled religious belief is impossible, it is for me to show by our quiet and resolute confidence, that we have conclusive evidence that Christ came from God, and that his teaching is clear enough to be understood.

I do not mean that if we have intellectual difficulties about Christian truth, we should profess a firmness of belief of which we are not conscious, and, closing our minds to all free inquiry, should cultivate a blind and unreasoning faith; what I mean is, that if we are Christians at all, we should honour Christ, not merely by living well, but by endeavouring to arrive at immovable and intelligent certainty on the great question of his divine commission. If his very disciples sluggishly permit themselves to be so far influenced by surrounding scepticism as to be themselves agitated by doubts and difficulties which they have not honestly solved, it is not likely that other men will come to believe in him.

Nor do I mean that we should determine to adhere to the precise form of Christian belief which we may have inherited from our predecessors, without trying to learn for ourselves what Christ taught while he was on earth, and what he revealed afterwards by his apostles. We do not glorify *him* by practically maintaining the infallibility of

mere human teachers; and so long as we are willing to listen only to *their* statements of Christian truth we may be doing him positive dishonour, by placing before the world their erroneous or uncertain theories as part of his authoritative revelation.

The intelligent study of Christian scriptures will lead almost any man of unbiassed mind, living in the light which now rests on Christendom, to the discovery of the great facts and doctrines which constitute the substance of the teaching of Christ and his apostles; these truths are so broadly stated, or so distinctly implied, that they can hardly be missed.

The name of Christ will be glorified in us, if it is plain to mankind that we as Christians, as the result of fair and thoughtful and honest inquiry, are fully satisfied that he revealed the Father, and that his teaching, instead of being dim, vague, and cloudy, has given us a clear and definite, creed concerning the relations between man and God. In a Christian man permanent religious doubt, permanent religious ignorance, is a dishonour to Christ; they imply that it is uncertain after all whether he was a teacher sent from God, or that what he revealed is so unimportant that we do not think it worth to master it, or so indistinct that, having tried to learn his meaning, we have been unsuccessful. To trust mere human teachers, however wise or great, instead

of listening to his own words and the words of his inspired apostles, is to offer him a still more grievous insult.

II. Our Lord Jesus came to atone for human sin, and so to accomplish, as well as make known, the purposes of the divine mercy in relation to mankind. The infinite moral value of his sufferings and death will be revealed in the eternal security and eternal blessedness of all who love him. The shame and contempt of the judgment hall and the cross will then be compensated by a transcendent reward. Every redeemed spirit will be an illustration of the efficacy and worth of Christ's obedience unto death. But the atonement he wrought out should be glorified in us now. And how can this be done? It can only be done, as it seems to me, by a far more tranquil rest in the love of God, a far profounder certainty that we have received his forgiveness, a richer, fuller joy in our reconciliation to him, that many Christian people profess. It is positively thought a presumptuous and a perilous thing to dismiss all fear, and to triumph in the height and depth, the length and breadth, of the divine mercy. Some reserve, some hesitation, some doubt, as to whether God has pardoned our sins or not, is thought to be reverential and humble and safe. It may be that in too many of us there are grave causes for questioning whether we have repented of sin and trusted in Christ; and then God forbid that there should be untroubled security. In that case, however, let it be remembered that there is, not only a

loss of personal peace, but a failure to honour Christ. If all Christian men were in that condition, this strange and miserable consequence would follow -- that after the Son of God had died for the sins of the world, no solitary soul was perfectly sure that its sins had been actually forgiven. It is our duty, not our interest merely, to reach at least such a measure of Christian vigour as shall leave us in no doubt that we have been renewed by the Holy Ghost, and that our disobedience has been pardoned.

It is one of the most frequent arguments for the necessity of a supernatural revelation, that apart from it sinful men could never have any rest of heart, could never be sure of the mercy of God; but what becomes of this argument if we who have received a supernatural revelation have no rest, and remain in uncertainty still? You maintain that nothing but the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ can quiet the agitated conscience and inspire trust in God; but if your conscience is agitated still, though you believe in the atonement, and if you are still haunted with dreadful fears, you virtually declare that Christ is dead in vain.

You contend for the doctrine of justification by faith, and argue most conclusively, that if our justification depends upon the intensity and energy of our love for God and the perfection of our obedience, the soul must remain under the awful fear that its guilt is still uncanceled, and must be paralyzed by the terrible doubt.

But how can you reason this with a good conscience, and how can you expect men to accept your reasoning, if you who profess to believe in Christ have not escaped from your trouble, and are still unable to look up into the face of God with quiet and grateful trust? If the whole church were blessed with the peace which passeth all understanding -- could stand before the world and, with a radiant countenance and a voice of joy, say, Our sins have been pardoned, for Christ has died -- depend upon it millions of men, conscious of their guilt and weary of its burden, would come and bow with us before the throne of God, and ask for redemption through the blood of Christ according to the riches of his grace. The atonement of Christ would be glorified in your assurance of the divine mercy.

III. The Lord Jesus came to give us the victory over all the powers of evil. He came to do this -- not merely by the natural influence of a brighter example of holy living than the world had ever witnessed before, or by creating new and more pathetic and more powerful motives to resist temptation and to do the will of God -- but by direct and supernatural action on the human soul. This is a principal article in our creed. We assert the necessity and the reality of the new birth, and of the continual presence and mysterious power of the Holy Ghost in every Christian man. And yet it is the prevailing temper and habit of the church to speak -- what, I suppose, I must call -- very modestly of

the degree of excellence which we have a right to hope for, at any rate in this world. We tacitly take it for granted that there are stains upon us which Christ cannot remove. We seem to think it would be presumptuous to expect that the force of evil habits will ever be quite overmastered by a diviner power. For men to dream of obtaining any high and noble form of saintliness, is secretly regarded as a proof that they know nothing of their own weakness, and need to be taught humility. What do you think would be the influence of thoughts like these in a great hospital? Suppose that when a patient came in, full of confidence in the skill of the physician, the man in the next bed smiled at his simplicity, and told him that he would know better by and by: suppose that in every ward throughout the house it was the habit to say, "Well, something may be done here to alleviate our pains; our worst symptoms may be subdued; we may perhaps recover sufficiently to get about again: but as for regaining perfect health and strength, this is not to be expected." No science, or nursing, could master the mischievous influence of this universal despondency. If I were a physician in such an hospital, I should feel myself grievously insulted, and I should soon resign my post. The people that came to visit their sick friends would diffuse through all the neighbourhood the prevailing opinion of the patients; and no sick man, except from sheer despair, would ever ask for admission. The governors might issue

pamphlets to show that the house of clean, was well ventilated, and was in a healthy situation, that the nurses were exemplary, that the physicians and surgeons were kindly and accomplished men; and they might look up their old reports and produce cases in which the hospital was wonderfully successful, but if nobody in the house, now, expected to be cured, if it was hardly possible to find any living man who was willing to confess that he had been cured, all would go for nothing. An hospital is honoured by the confidence it inspires in its success in curing disease; and Christ is *glorified* by the confidence he inspires in *his* success in delivering from the power of sin.

I do not ask you to go about the world declaring that you have reached perfection; the world knows better, so far as most of us are concerned: but I do ask you to let the world know that Christ has promised to make men holy, and that you believe that he can do it. Putting aside altogether the controversy as to whether complete freedom from sin is attainable or not in this world, which is a speculative and a philosophical rather than a practical question, Do you believe that holiness such as St. Paul's or St. John's can be reached by Christian people in these times? Is God able to make every man the world over, that believes in Christ, as fervent in spiritual affection, as devout in prayer, as patient in suffering, as faithful in obedience, as these two apostles were? If not, why not? You must not talk of your having



been born in sin; if you were, they were too. You must not talk of the necessary imperfection of human nature; they too were men, not angels. You must not talk of the malignity of the devil; he was quite as anxious to ruin them as he can be to ruin any of us. It will be hardly safe to suggest that there was something in the men themselves that rendered it more possible for them than for you to become holy for this involves the heresy that their holiness is not an illustration of the exceeding greatness of the power that worketh in those that believe, but an illustration of what excellence may be reached with the help of God's grace by men who are *naturally*, and apart from God's grace, well disposed. You will not say that God is weary of his work, that the energy of Christ is exhausted. What then will you say?

Why, say this -- that there is not a human soul that may not obtain from the Lord Jesus the same baptism of fire, the same mastery over sin, the same intimacy of communion with God, as the apostles themselves obtained. Let Christ be glorified in your broad and generous confidence in his power to impress, upon the soul that steadfastly trusts in him, the very image of God's perfection.

I do not wonder that men are so careless about becoming Christians. It hardly seems worth while. There appears to be very little good possible to Christian men in *this* world, if we listen to the common testimony of

Christian people; and what is possible in the next world, may, it is supposed, be made sure within an hour of death. If it were clear that a deep and blessed peace could be had now, there would be a reason for believing in Christ at once; and if the prevailing temper of the church justified the hope that victory over sin could be had now, this would be an additional and most urgent motive for immediate trust in the divine mercy and power. The religious life is represented by us to men outside as a life of perpetual confession of sin, with no clear reason for confidence that sin has been pardoned; and a continual battle against temptation, in which nothing can be expected but almost uniform defeat. Thank God, even those of us who give men this impression know that our life is a far better and diviner thing than this; but we must give a very different representation of what Christian living really is, before the name of Christ is glorified, in us.

There is no need for me to insist on how greatly Christ would be glorified if every one of his servants actually reached the measure of perfection which some illustrious saints have shown to be possible -- if we were all as upright as St. James, as full of charity as St. John, as zealous as St. Paul, as fervent as St. Peter; if we were all as devout as John Howe or Jeremy Taylor; as energetic in Christian work as Richard Baxter; as philanthropic as John Howard; as pure, as gentle, as just, as some whom we ourselves have

known and in whom we saw the very law of Christ “writ out in living characters:” the fruits of the Spirit not hanging here and there -- half of them blighted, and hardly any of them fully ripened by the genial influences of heaven -- but in heavy clusters weighing down the tree, rich and beautiful as though they grew in Eden or in the very Paradise above. When that day comes men will say that they have seen the holy city, the new Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God; and they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations unto it, and the whole earth shall rejoice in the final victory of the love of God over the sin and miseries of all mankind. -- R.W. DALE, M.A.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE. OF A STRANGE HAND THAT WROTE WORDS ON THE WALL.

NOT long after the time of the great Nebuchadnezzar one of his descendants came to reign in Babylon, whose name was Belshazzar. Those who are learned in the inscriptions which appear among the ruins of the old city, as they have been dug up of late, think that they have his name there, as having been joined with his father in the kingdom, and as being the last that reigned before Babylon was taken by the Medes and Persians. The Bible story I am going to tell you agrees with this, though it does not say anything about Belshazzar's reigning along with his father. It only tells how his city was taken, and himself slain.

War had been going on for some time between the Babylonians and the Medes and Persians, led by Cyrus, about whom Isaiah the prophet had spoken by name before he was born, as one to be raised by God to destroy the power of Babylon. A great battle had been fought in the plains, and Cyrus had gained it. He then marched against Babylon itself, and laid siege to it. He adopted wise plans in assailing it, and persevered for two years. But the place was very strong; its walls were one of the wonders of the world, and the king and the people thought themselves perfectly safe behind them. Indeed, they laughed outright

at what Cyrus and his army were doing, and had many a merry joke about it. They thought that their foes were sure to get weary soon, and would have to go away; but God's time was come to destroy the city. One night the king of Babylon, thinking that all was right, made a great feast in his palace. He was a bad man, proud and selfish. He had not taken warning from what happened to Nebuchadnezzar, nor did he fear the true God. So at this grand feast, to which a thousand high lords were asked, he made a show of his worship of idols, and did a daring thing to defy the God of Israel. He had been drinking wine freely, and was heated with it. Then, as he called for more he bade his servants bring out the sacred vessels of gold and silver that had been brought from the Lord's temple in Jerusalem, when that city was taken by Nebuchadnezzar, and told them to fill them for a carouse to the honour of the idol gods. So, you see, he profaned the holy cups in the service of stocks and stones. I hope he might say, These are the strong gods, lords, as the very spoils of the temple of the Jews in our hands may show: fill the bowls full and pass them round, and let us praise the gods of Babylon. Probably there were images of these in the hall; and as the king spoke, he would look round on them with pride, while his wives and courtiers quaffed their wine, and shouted applause. An awful answer came to their impious boasting.

In the midst of the mirth, which was loud in the hall, the lords whose eyes were on the king saw him get pale with terror in a moment, and his very knees were shaking where he sat. His look was fixed on a part of the wall straight before him, just where the great lamp cast its bright light on the plaster. The courtiers, following the direction of the king's eye, soon came to understand what had made him so quake for fear. There was the appearance of a man's hand, its fingers holding a pen, and writing on the smooth walls. Words could be distinctly seen, after the hand had written, left in the clear light. But you say, That was a strange thing to happen; yet why should it have frightened the king so terribly? Ah, the reason was, that his conscience was telling him that he had been doing a very wicked thing against the God of heaven, and his dread was lest the hand had come to write his doom. He could not make out the meaning of the words; but, as sin always makes people do when strange things startle them, he feared the worst. He cried out for his wise men to come and explain the words, and offered them great rewards, if they could do it. Poor man, he was soon to be unable to reward any one.

Just as it happened in the case of Nebuchadnezzar's dreams, so it came to pass in the case of this mysterious writing on the wall. Not one of all the wise men about the court could tell what it meant. They were obliged to say to

the king that they could not explain it. That made the trouble and fear of all in the hall greater than ever. The story ran through the whole palace, and there was nothing but consternation. The outcry was so great, that the queen-mother who had not been at the feast, hearing about it, came into the room, and told the king that there was one man in his kingdom that would interpret the writing. She reminded him how high that man had stood in his father's favour, and urged him to send for him. The person the queen spoke of was Daniel. Belshazzar was too bad a man to care to have one so good near him, and he had not been trusted and consulted, of late years, as in Nebuchadnezzar's time. He came, however, when now sent for, and soon showed the king that the writing had been sent from God to tell him of his punishment, near at hand. After he had said that he would have no reward from such a king's hands, and had reminded him what a lesson for the humbling of pride Nebuchadnezzar had received, and how yet Belshazzar had taken no warning, but had gone on in his wickedness, he proceeded to explain the writing. He said the words, were MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN, words which meant, Numbered, Numbered, Weighed, Divided. The explanation of the words was that the hours of Belshazzar were numbered by God, and his reign was at end; that God the great Judge had weighed him in the balance, and found him light and worthless; and that his dominion was divided, and

given to the Medes and Persians. It was a terrible explanation to hear, and it all came true that night.

For while Belshazzar and his lords had been in high feast and revel, the army of Cyrus had got entrance into the city. It happened in this way: The river, on which Babylon was built, flowed right through the place. But it was defended at the inflow and the outflow, and all along both banks, and with great gates and walls, and was itself a deep stream. Nobody thought that an army could get in by the course of the river. But Cyrus contrived to turn the waters aside into a great hollow marsh, into which the overflow in floods had been often turned, and so left the channel dry. He had stationed troops, both where the river flowed in and where it came out, and told them to dash in as soon as the waters were fordable. They did as they were commanded, and soon, in the carelessness and security that reigned everywhere, became masters of the city. Cyrus cleared the streets, posted guards, and swept on to the palace. Alarmed by the writing on the wall, the king and those around him soon heard the tramp and shout of their armed foes. They sallied forth, sword in hand, attempting to fight, or seeking to escape, and were cut to pieces. "In that night," the Bible says in a very few words, "was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain." And so always, "the triumphing of the wicked is short," and of such proud revels as were held in the hall of Babylon that night it may always be said, even



when visible punishment does not come so swiftly, “The end of these things is death.”

The king, Darius the Mede, who now took the throne of Babylon, held Daniel, as well he might, in great honour. When he arranged matters for the government of the empire, he made the prophet chief of all. There were to be a hundred and twenty governors under three presidents, of these three Daniel was the first. This favour to the Jews displeased the others, and led to a cunning plot against Daniel’s life, of which I will tell you in another story.

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. What two prophets specially foretell the fall of Babylon? And in what chapters of their books are the predictions to be found?
2. What psalm speaks of Babylon as doomed to destruction?
3. What book of scripture predicts the sudden and terrible ruin of another Babylon?
4. Where does Isaiah prophesy of Cyrus by name?
5. What two books of Scripture close and open, respectively, with a proclamation of Cyrus?

6. When were a great many people busy eating and drinking, and making merry, when a warning of destruction at hand had been long before their eyes?

7. How many vessels of gold and silver, taken from the temple in Jerusalem, did Cyrus send back with the restored captives?

8. Who was it that fell, in sudden change of mind from hate to awe, before a light brighter than the sun?

9. Can you give an example of the working of an evil conscience, on striking news being taken to a ruler?

10. What king was it that disliked a particular prophet because he told him the truth, loving only those who flattered him?

ANSWERS to the foregoing will be found by turning to the following chapters: -- Isa. xiii. and xiv., and Jer. li.; Ps. cxxxvii.; Rev. xviii.; Isa. xlv. and xlv.; Matt. xxiv.; Ezra i.; Acts xxvi.; Matt. xiv.; 1 Kings xxii.

-----

*Prayer.*

O GOD, give Thy grace to kings and princes, and rich and prosperous men, that in their greatness and their wealth they may not forget Thee. When Thou givest us health and comfort, and all things richly to enjoy, do not leave us to put created delights in Thy place. Let us not be proud or lifted up, or forgetful of coming death. Let our feasting be with Thy blessing, and without forgetting the poor that are in want. Thou seest, O Lord, the great cities of the earth, Thou knowest their sins and their sorrows; have mercy upon them. Bless all Thine own children dwelling in them, and prosper all their endeavours to remove the poverty and vice that are around them. Hasten the day when there will be no more sieges or wars. We bless Thee that there is a city that has walls and foundations which no one can overthrow or remove. May we have mansions there. May we go in through the gates into the golden city, of which Thou art the light, and eat of the tree of life growing there, and drink of the crystal river which flows from Thy throne. We ask it for the Lamb's sake. *Amen.*

-----

## EVENING WORSHIP.

ALMIGHTY God, Creator of the heavens and of the earth, again we worship Thee. We thank Thee that Thou art slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy; that Thou art so patient with us in our folly and our sin; and Thou art ready to forgive; and that Thou dost rejoice to cleanse and to purify the souls of all who come to Thee in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. For His sake have mercy upon us. *Amen.*

### HYMN, or Psalm xvi. 5-11.

LORD, if our dwelling-place thou art,  
With all thine own we dwell;  
They never from each other part  
Who love the Lord full well.

They mingle still their sons and prayers;  
Thy people, Lord, are one--  
Thy people in the vale of tears,  
Thy people near the throne.

Midst cherubim and seraphim

They mind their Lord's affairs;  
And if we bring our work to him,  
Our work is one with theirs.

Yet here their raptures may not burn,  
Their peace may not prevail;  
The household here doth sometimes mourn,  
Doth sometimes faint and fail.

O unmixed sweetness of their song!  
O fulness of their love!  
Lord! Hallow us to join ere long  
The family above.

LUKE VIII. 19-25, 41-56.

THEN came to him his mother and his brethren, and could not come at him for the press. 20. And it was told him by certain which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee. 21. And he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it. 22. Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth. 23. But as they sailed, he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled with water, and they were in jeopardy. 24. And they came to him, and awoke him, saying

Master, master, we perish! Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm. 25. And he said unto them, Where is your faith? And they, being afraid, wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him. 41. And, behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue: and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and besought him that he would come into his house: 42. For he had only one daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a dying. But as he went the people thronged him. 42. And a woman, having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any. 44. Came behind him, and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanch'd. 45. And Jesus said, Who touched me? When all denied, Peter and they that were with him said, Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? 46. And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me; for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me. 47. And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately. 48. And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace. 49. While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master. 50. But when Jesus heard it, he answered him, saying, Fear

not: believe only, and she shall be made whole. 51. And when he came into the house, he suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and mother of the maiden. 52. And all wept, and bewailed her: but he said, Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth. 53. And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead. 54. And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid arise. 55. And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat. 56. And her parents were astonished: but he charged them that they should tell no man what was done.

-----

*Prayer.*

ALMIGHTY God, Thou art never weary of listening to our prayers and thanksgivings; and we entreat Thee, before this holy day has quite gone by, to listen to us once more, while we praise Thee for all Thy goodness and invoke Thy blessing. We thank Thee not only for the mercy Thou hast shown to ourselves to-day, but for all the grace Thou hast bestowed on a great multitude of souls that no man can number, scattered over many countries, and speaking many tongues. With Thine angels, we rejoice over every sinner that has been brought to repentance. We praise Thee for the larger wisdom, the firmer strength, and the deeper peace, Thou hast granted to those who have long known Thee. We praise Thee that Thou hast bound up the

broken-hearted, and enabled the weary and the sorrowful to forget their weariness and their trouble in Thy love. We praise Thee that Thou hast granted to the rich a nobler joy than all their wealth could purchase, and that the poor have been made rich with everlasting treasure. It is more blessed for Thee to give than it is for us to receive: we rejoice in Thy joy; we adore the love which causes Thee to find delight in the strength and gladness of Thy creatures.

We beseech Thee, in Thy great mercy, not to suffer any of the holy thoughts and right purposes which have been awakened in the hearts of the men to-day, to be swept away by the returning flood of their common life to-morrow. Let not the glow of devout affection be chilled before the day of rest shall come again. May those who have been filled with awe and wonder by the vision of things unseen and eternal, abide under their control all week through.

Give courage and constancy to any of Thy servants who are troubled and disheartened by the apparent failure of all their efforts to bring men home to Thyself. Help them to feel that what saddens them saddens Thee too. May they remember Him who was despised and rejected of men; but whose compassions failed not though they mocked and scourged Him, and put Him to a cruel death. By patient continuance in well-doing, whether men receive their word or not, may they seek for glory, honour, and immortality.

Let Thy blessing rest upon all whom we love. Especially we ask Thee, that if any of them are at this moment in great trouble, they may find consolation in



Thyself. If any are feeling after Thee in the darkness, if haply they may find Thee, may they this very night hear Thy voice and see Thy face. We unite our prayers with theirs. Have mercy upon them, O God, and grant them Thy salvation.

Forgive us now all the sins and follies of which we have been guilty this day, and grant us Thy peace, for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

#### *Morning.*

**Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.**

And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved?

But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.

Matt. xix. 23, 24, 25, 26.

#### *Evening.*

**And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed by ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God.**

Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled.  
Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh.

Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy; for behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.

But woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation.

Woe unto you that are full! For ye shall hunger.

Luke vi. 20, 21, 23, 24, 25.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.**

Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.

Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! For so did their fathers to the false prophets.

But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you,

Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.

And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek, offer also the other.

Matt. x. 22.

Luke vi. 22, 26, 27, 28, 29.

*Evening.*

**How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!**

And I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, saith the Lord.

I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment.

Isa. lii. 7.

Jer. xxx.i. 14.

Eze. xxxiv. 16.

## WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**I will praise thee with my whole heart: before the gods will I sing praise unto thee.**

I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy loving-kindness, and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.

In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul.

Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.

Ps. cxxxviii. 1, 2, 3.      2 Tim. iv. 17.

*Evening.*

**Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;**

Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.

And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation.

2 Cor. i. 3, 4, 5, 6.

**THURSDAY.**

*Morning.*

**Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.**

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets,  
and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would  
I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen  
gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!  
Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.

For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till  
ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the  
Lord.

Matt. xxiii. 36, 37, 38, 39.

*Evening.*

**And I will raise up for them a plant of renown, and  
they shall be no more consumed with hunger in the land,  
neither bear the shame of the heathen any more.**

Thus shall they know that I the Lord their God am  
with them, and that they, even the house of Israel, are my  
people, saith the Lord God.

Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and  
come up with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be  
upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and  
sorrow and mourning shall flee away.

Eze. xxxiv. 29, 30.

Isa. li. 11.

**FRIDAY.**

*Morning.*

**Did not I weep for him that was in trouble? Was not my soul grieved for the poor?**

And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee, then thou shalt relieve him; yea though he be a stranger, or a sojourner: that he may live with thee.

Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee.

But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind.

Job iii. 25.      Lev. xxv. 35.      Matt. xiv. 12, 13.

*Evening.*

**And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.**

Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt and the blind.

And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.

And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in that my house may be filled.

Matt. xxv. 40.      Luke xiv. 21, 22, 23.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.**

Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men: but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.

Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

2 Cor. v. 10, 11.      Acts. ii. 38.      1 Cor. xv. 53.

*Evening.*

**And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain.**



And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.

And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.

Even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

Rev. v. 6, 7, 13, 14.      1 Thess. i. 10.

# HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

## FORTIETH WEEK.

### MORNING WORSHIP.

ALMIGHTY God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which Thy Son Jesus Christ came in the form of a servant to die for us; that in the last day, when He shall come again in His glorious majesty to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal, through Him who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, now and ever. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* ii. 1-8.

COME, Thou long-expected Jesus,  
Born to set thy people free:  
From our fears and sins release us;  
Let us find our rest in Thee.

Israel's strength and consolation,  
Hope of all the earth Thou art;

Blest desire of every nation,  
Joy of every longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver;  
Born a child, and yet a king;  
Born to reign in us for ever;  
Now thy gracious kingdom bring.

By thine own Eternal Spirit,  
Rule in all our hearts alone:  
By thine all-sufficient merit,  
Raise us to thy glorious throne.

#### I. SAMUEL. XVIII. 1-4.

AND it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. 2. And Saul took him that day, and would let him go no more home to his father's house. 3. Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. 4. And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle.

## II. Samuel I. 17, 19-27.

And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul, and over Jonathan his son: 19. The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places: how are the mighty fallen! 20. Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph. 21. Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain upon you, nor fields of offerings; for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, the shield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed with oil. 22. From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back, and the sword of Saul returned not empty. 23. Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided: they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions. 24. Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you in scarlet, with other delights; who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel. 25. How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high places. 26. I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women. 27 How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished.

## II. Samuel IX. 1-5, 7.

AND David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake? 2. And there was of the house of Saul a servant, whose name was Ziba: and when they had called him unto David, the king said unto him, Art thou Ziba? And he said, Thy servant is he. 3. And the king said, Is there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may shew the kindness of God unto him? And Ziba said unto the king, Jonathan hath yet a son, which is lame on his feet. 4. And the king said unto him, Where is he? And Ziba, said unto the king, Behold, he is in the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, in Lo-debar. 5. Then king David sent, and fetched him out of the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, from Lo-debar. 7. And David said unto him, Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father: and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually.

---

*Prayer.*

ALMIGHTY, everlasting God! Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! Creator of all things, Judge of all men! We acknowledge and lament in Thy sight that we were conceived and born in sin, and are prone to evil and unfit for any good. We have broken Thy holy law, times and ways without number, by contempt of Thee and Thy word, by distrust of Thy grace, and vain confidence in ourselves and in the world; by thoughts and works grievously offending Thy holy Majesty, and sinning against our neighbour. Thus have we buried ourselves more and more deeply in spiritual death. But we do earnestly repent, and are sorry for these our misdoings. Have mercy upon us, most gracious and merciful Father, for the sake of Thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Forgive us all that is past. Grant us and increase within us Thy Holy Spirit, who shall teach us penitently to acknowledge our sins, and being touched with lively sorrow, by true faith to obtain remission of them in Christ; -- so that daily dying unto sin, in newness of life we may serve and please Thee, to the glory of Thy name and the edification of Thy church, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Accept, O Lord, through Thy beloved Son, our thanksgiving for Thine unspeakable love and goodness. Thou art the Father of mercies and the God of all

consolation, full of compassion, forgiving iniquity,  
transgression, and sin. For Thy glory Thou didst create us  
after Thine image; and when we forsook Thee, Thou didst  
not leave us in the bands of death, but didst so love the  
world as to give Thy Son to be our Saviour. We thank  
Thee for His death, that saveth us from death, and for His  
life, that opened unto us the way to life eternal. We thank  
Thee for the new and better covenant; for Thy great and  
precious promises; that Thou hast given us eternal life in  
Christ; that we have the clear and sure revelation of thy will  
in the Holy Scriptures; that Thou hast founded Thy church  
upon apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the  
chief cornerstone. We thank Thee that Thou hast  
communicated to us the word of reconciliation; that Thou  
hast opened our eyes, and turned us from darkness unto  
light; that Thou hast adopted us to be Thy sons, and  
joint-heirs with Christ, and made us His members, and  
given us His Spirit. All Thy paths, O Lord! are mercy and  
truth to such as keep Thy covenant. Oh! continue Thy  
lovingkindness unto us, that we may rejoice and be glad in  
Thee all our days. Guide us by Thy counsel, and afterward  
receive us to Thy glory, where, with all the blessed host of  
heaven, we may behold, admire, and perfectly and joyfully  
praise Thee, our most glorious Creator, Redeemer, and  
Sanctifier, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

THOU God of truth and God of love, who desirest truth in the inward parts, and love in our hearts towards Thee and towards all men, grant that we, being delivered from all deceivableness of unrighteousness, may truly possess religion pure and undefiled, by having such hearts in us as will fear Thee and keep all Thy commandments always, through faith in Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* cxxi. 1-8.

FATHER, I know that all my life  
Is portioned out for me,  
The changes that will surely come,  
I do not fear to see;  
I ask Thee for a present mind  
Intent on pleasing Thee.

I ask Thee for a thoughtful love,  
Through constant watching wise  
To meet the glad with joyful smiles,  
And wipe the weeping eyes:  
A heart at leisure from itself  
To soothe and sympathize.



I would not have the restless wil  
That hurries to and fro,  
That seeks for some great thing to do  
Or secret thing to know;  
I would be treated as a child,  
And guided where I go.

Wherever in the world I am  
In whatsoe'er estate,  
I have a fellowship with hearts  
To keep and cultivate:  
A work of lowly love to do  
For Him on whom I wait.

I ask Thee for the daily strength,  
To none that ask denied;  
A mind to blend with outward life,  
While keeping at thy side:  
Content to fill a little space,  
If thou be glorified.

Briers beset our every path,  
Which call for patient care;  
There is a cross in every lot,  
A constant need for prayer:

But lowly hearts that lean on Thee  
Are happy everywhere.

In service which thy love appoints,  
There are no bonds for me;  
My secret heart is taught the truth  
That makes thy children free:  
A life of self-renouncing love  
Is one of liberty.

#### DEUTERONOMY V. 22-29.

THESE words the Lord spake unto all your assembly in the mount, out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice; and he added no more. And he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me. 23. And it came to pass, when ye heard the voice out of the midst of the darkness, (for the mountain did burn with fire,) that ye came near unto me, even all the heads of your tribes, and your elders; 24. And ye said, Behold, the Lord our God hath shewed us his glory, and his greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire: we have seen this day that God doth talk with man, and he liveth. 25. Now therefore why should we

die? for this great fire will consume us. If we hear the voice of the Lord our God any more, then we shall die. 26. For who is there of all flesh, that hath heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived? 27. Go thou near, and hear all that the Lord our God shall say; and speak thou unto us all that the Lord our God shall speak unto thee, and we will hear it, and do it. 28. And the Lord heard the voice of your words, when ye spake unto me; and the Lord said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee: they have well said all that they have spoken. 29. O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!

### EZEKIEL XXXIII. 10-20.

THEREFORE, O thou son of man, speak unto the house of Israel, Thus ye speak, saying, If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how should we then live? 11. Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel? 12.

Therefore, thou son of man, say unto the children of thy people, The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression: as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall thereby in the day that he turneth from his wickedness; neither shall the righteous be able to live for his righteousness in the day that he sinneth.

13. When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousness shall not be remembered: but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it.

14. Again, when I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right;

15 If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die.

16. None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him: he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live.

17. Yet the children of thy people say, The way of the Lord is not equal: but, as for them, their way is not equal.

18. When the righteous turneth from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, he shall even die thereby.

20. Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. O ye house of Israel, I will judge you every one after his ways.

GALATIANS. V. 18-26.

BUT if ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

19. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

20. Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 21. Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

22. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23. Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. 24. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts. 25. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. 26. Let us not be desirous of vain-glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

-----

## SERMON XL.

“THOU SHALT LOVE THE LORD THY GOD WITH ALL THY HEART, AND WITH ALL THY SOUL, AND WITH ALL THY STRENGTH: THIS IS THE FIRST COMMANDMENT.

AND THE SECOND IS LIKE, NAMELY THIS,  
THOU SHALT LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR AS THYSELF.”

-- Mark xii. 30, 31.

WHAT is piety? What is salvation? What is holiness? What is our enduring good and peace? What does God will us to be and do? In one word, what is true religion in the soul? Let us state, in a few words, what true religion is *not*, before we try to show what it is.

1. *True religion in the soul is not the possession of much knowledge about religion.* We cannot be too well-informed, if we make good use of what we know. Facts without faith are useless, and are as light without an eye. Faith without facts is an eye without light. But how different a thing it is knowing about truth, from seeing the truth with our minds and hearts -- *knowing* what is right and *being* right! Every village almost has its clever man, who may know his Bible well, and who loves to argue with less clever neighbours upon the most difficult questions in it;

yet who gives evidence all the while, by his bad temper, selfishness, evil speaking, and often by lying, dishonesty, and cunning, that he never possessed any religion, though he knew much about it; and so, we dare say, the devil knows more than all who have ever lived on earth as to what God has said to and done for man.

2. Nor does true religion in the soul consist in *having great religious privileges*; such as being trained up by pious parents, or in our being members of a congregation and hearers of a minister eminent for their godliness. These are, indeed, great blessings; but how often are they enjoyed and boasted of by men who have no true religion! How many heard Christ himself preach who yet were never saved by Him! Judas followed Him for years, and ate and drank with Him, and heard and saw Him in public and in private; yet he is lost for ever. Capernaum, which was exalted to heaven on account of its privileges, is cast down to hell for the abuse of them.

3. *The formal use of the means of grace is not true religion.* It is quite possible to know the Bible and to remain deeply ignorant of God, who speaks to us in the Bible; and to go to the church without going to God; and to hear the minister without hearing God; and to come before God as his people come, while the heart is far from Him; and to receive the bread and wine into the body at the sacrament, without receiving the love and life of Jesus

Christ into the soul. The means of grace are a ladder to help us to the truth. But we may sit down on the steps of the ladder instead of ascending by them. David prayed, “O send out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me, let them bring me unto thy *holy hill*, and to thy tabernacle; then will I go unto the *altar of God*.” But would he stop at any of these? No; he would go by these means “unto *God*, his exceeding joy!” “*To know God* is better than burnt-offering.” We may make idols of our privileges, and of our means of grace, and thus give them that confidence, and love, and reverence, which are due to God only.

4. *Nor does the possession of great gifts, which are used in the service of religion even, necessarily imply the possession of religion itself.* Gifts are not character, but powers and talents in the hand of character. When used as instruments of unrighteousness, they become Satanic; for what is Satan but mental power without God? But even when gifts *are* so used as to advance the cause of religion in the world, yet they may not be guided by, or minister to, religion in ourselves. “Though I have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, *I am nothing!*”

5. *Making a great religious profession, and being thought very zealous and pious by men,* is not, we need



hardly remark, any evidence of real piety. We *must* confess Christ before men, and make an open profession of our faith by words and life, We dare not, if we could, conceal our love to Him and to his people. But there is little danger in our day of falling into this error. Hermits are not to be found. Hypocrites are common. Our trial is not from martyrdom, but from praise. Let us be warned by what we see in the history of the Pharisees against the danger of deceiving ourselves and others by profession without principle. They were famous for their knowledge of the Bible and tradition, and prided themselves upon their orthodoxy. They appeared to have the nicest and most scrupulous conscience in obeying all the precepts of the law which affected the outer man, especially in trifles: they fasted twice a-week; they gave tithes to the church of *all* they possessed; they went up regularly to the temple, and there, and everywhere else, made long prayers; they were so zealous that they would compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and if they were “not like other men,” they did not profess to take any credit to themselves for this, but “*thanked God*” for their superiority. The people, too, looked up to them as the holiest, wisest, and most exemplary of men as as their true guides in every religious matter. In comparison with them, they thought very little of Jesus Christ. What was *He* but a sabbath-breaker, a wine-bibber, and a glutton? But these same Pharisees -- with the few exceptions of the

ernest-minded who, in ignorance, yet in sincerity, were seeking a righteousness by the law, --were, in God's sight, among the worst characters in all Judea, and farther from all good than the most profligate and abandoned; and they hated Jesus, because He found them out, and read to themselves and to the world their vile hearts. They had a great deal of profession, and were "highly esteemed among men;" but they had not a grain of principle, and were loathsome hypocrites in the sight of the holy and truthful God.

6. *True religion does not consist in our making great sacrifices for religion.* Selfishness is, indeed, inconsistent with religion; for religion is self-sacrifice. If we first give *ourselves* to the Lord, we will easily part with all other things when it is right to do so. But those other things may be given up, and self retained. How much may we do, and give for "our church" -- "our principles" -- "our party" -- without doing, or giving, anything for our Saviour! God asks the heart first: men generally give it last, if they give it at all. Will-worship of our own invention is common; God's worship, according to his own desire, is rare. Yet how much nobler is the sacrifice of the heart than that of all things which we call ours! When we give our goods, or "give our body to be burned," we give what is finite -- the act is done. But when we give our hearts's love, it is infinite -- it is never done, but is doing for ever!

Lastly, *It does not imply the existence of true religion to be strongly excited about religious things.* The feelings and affections must ever be deeply moved by true religion; but they may be much moved without it. Sermons may excite the hearer to tears; and so may the voice and manner of the preacher as well as his subject. Sacred music has the same effect. We have often entered Roman Catholic churches; and with deep interest we have watched the poor people kneeling, and weeping bitter tears, before beautiful pictures or crucifixes, which spoke eloquently through the eye to the heart of the sufferings of Jesus; while sublime music rolled in waves of exquisite and overpowering harmony through the venerable cathedral, and gave greater intensity to the feelings. Why did those people weep? From what else than from the sad spectacle of Jesus dying for their sins! The poor worshippers were sincere -- their tears were real. But had these worshippers, when in the cathedral, or out of it, necessarily true religion in the soul? -- were they holy, temperate, loving? So have we often heard in a Protestant church a minister picturing to his people, in words, the same scene of a dying Saviour, which, with more truth and beauty perhaps, we had beheld painted in the cathedral; and the people at home, as abroad, wept at the sad and sore sight which was presented to the eyes of their mind. These tears were also real, and the grief not affected, but sincere. But had they necessarily true religion in the church or

chapel any more than in the old cathedral? Were those who thus wept sober, honest, kind, prayerful, God-fearing people? Or was all this strong emotion caused, in both cases by a sight of the *bodily* sufferings of Christ, painted to the eye or ear, quite consistent with hard and impenitent hearts? Alas! It is so. There was a deep lesson, which both Papist and Protestant had not learnt. They had not learnt to love Jesus, or “to die with Him,” but only to weep for Him. They had not learnt “to glory in the cross, *by which we are crucified to the world, and the world to us.*” Their hearts felt *for* Him, but they did not feel *with* Him. It was the heart of man unrenewed which was stirred, not the heart renewed by the Spirit, and beating in sympathy with Jesus. They knew Christ “after the flesh” only. The sad results of many a hopeful “revival” will also prove the truth of what we say.

But if all this -- and much more might be added -- is *not* true religion, what, let us inquire, *is* true religion in the soul? We reply, that it is being in *a right state of mind towards God*; or, in others words, it is *loving God*, and *therefore* man; for this is being in a right state of mind towards Him.

We can give nothing higher or greater to God than our heart's affections. God demands this: “My son, give me thine heart.” He who loves us, and is himself love, cannot accept of less.

Love is the end both of the law and of the gospel. The great commandment of the law is, "Love the Lord with all thy heart." The gospel repeats the "same commandment which we have heard from the beginning." Its law is also love. One great difference between the law and the gospel is, that the latter enables us to be what the former only commands us to be. The law says, Do this and live. The gospel says, Live and do this. Now, every aspect of true religion involves or implies love to God as its very essence. For example: --

1. "*We must be born again;*" that is, a great change must take place in our spirits, through the agency of the Spirit of God -- a change so great, that it is likened to a birth of the soul. And what is this change? It is the passing out of that state of "enmity to god," which is the character of "the old man," "the flesh," "the carnal heart," into that state of love to God, which is the character of "the new man," "the spiritual mind," "the child of God," who "cries Abba," that is, "Father," -- the very language of love and confidence. "He that loveth, is born of God."

2. *We must "know God,"* for "this *is* eternal life, that they might know Thee, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent;" and irreligion is said to be ignorance of God. Our Lord says to his Father, "O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee!" and to the Jews, "Ye neither know me or my Father." The Apostle Paul condemns the

heathen, because “they did not like to retain God in their knowledge;” and he says to professing Christians, “Some of you have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.” All this implies, that to know God, is indeed true religion. But the love of God and the knowledge of God are one. Without love we do not and cannot know Him. “He that loveth, knoweth God; he that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love.” Love can alone comprehend love. Without love, we have no eye to “see God,” or to know Him.

3. “*We must love Christ.*” “If a man love me,” says Christ, “my Father will love him.” The apostle prays for grace to all “who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.” Unspeakable blessings are “promised to them that love Him.” Now, all this is right and true, because Jesus and his Father are one, equal in power and glory. They are not divided, either in their authority over us, or in their love to us; and we must not be divided in our love and obedience to them. As our knowledge of Jesus is one with our knowledge of God (for to us is “given the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus; and “He who seeth me,” said our Lord, “sees my Father also”), so is our love to Jesus one with our love to God. In loving Jesus, we love “God manifest in the flesh.”

4. “*We must love man in general, and Christians in particular.*” True. If we love God, we must love all He

loves, and hate all He hates. Our hearts will beat in harmony with God. Does God love the wicked world? He does so, while he abhors its wickedness. He causes his sun to shine, and his rain to descend, upon the evil and the good, the just and the unjust. He so loved the world, that He gave his only-begotten Son to die for it. And if we love God, we shall possess this love to all men, and like Him have compassion for, and pity, even the wicked, and seek to do them good, and by love to win them to God, who has had pity upon *them* and upon our own wicked selves. But God has special love to those who love Him in return. He loves such as his dear children; they must consequently be peculiarly dear to us. Hence it is, that our love to “the brethren” is one of the necessary results and sure evidence of our loving God himself. “If any man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that hateth his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we of Him, that he who loves God, loves his brother also.” Love which brings our souls into harmony with God, brings them also into harmony with all in God. Enmity is out of harmony with everything, even with itself. It would sting itself to death if it could. Love to God necessarily includes love to man, and special love to Christians.

5. “*We must keep God’s commandments.*” Says our Lord, “the first and greatest commandment is, Thou shalt

*love the Lord thy God* with all thy heart, and with all thy souls, and with all thy strength; and the next is like it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” The law of true love includes in it all other laws. “Love *is* the fulfilling of the law.” “The end of the commandment is love.” All right actions are but acts of the right state of mind -- love. For instance, he who loves God, will delight to hold communion with Him, to worship Him, to serve Him, to listen to his words, to become better acquainted with his will and ways, and to work with Him, and for Him. And he who loves man will do to others as he would be done by, for he loves his neighbour as himself; he will seek his good and his happiness in all things, and will even “lay down his life for the brethren.” We feel always safe as to our goods, our name, our well-being, in the hands of one who loves.

6. “*We must be reconciled to God, through faith in Jesus Christ.*” But what is being reconciled to God? Is it only to be reconciled to God as pardoning us freely through Jesus? Or is it not this first, certainly, but something more. Is it not our being reconciled to God as He is, to his whole character and will -- our being satisfied with Himself from seeing Him first as revealed through the Spirit, in the whole work of Jesus Christ? And what is this but loving God, whose name is love? What is this but having, through faith in the atonement, that love which casteth out the fear, which hath torment, for his holiness, and righteousness, and



power, and presence; and rejoicing in the glory of his Being and whole character? To love God, and to be reconciled to God, are one.

7. *Lastly, “We must obtain salvation through Jesus Christ.”* But what is salvation? It is deliverance, indeed, from the guilt of sin, through the blood of Jesus, freely bestowed by God’s grace, and received by us through simple faith; but this is not the whole of the salvation obtained for us, and given to us by our Lord. We must never forget, that He pardons in order to sanctify -- that he came to redeem us from all iniquity -- that his grace, which brings salvation, does so by “*teaching* us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.” In one word, salvation implies deliverance, through faith in Christ, from that which is our destruction and death -- a heart of enmity to God; and our profession of that which is our safety and life -- a heart of love to God.

One word in conclusion: Let us labour to *acquaint ourselves with God*. We know *about* Him: we must *know* Him. Perhaps, as has been hinted, we go to church, and to the communion, and to the Bible, but we must go to God himself, through Jesus Christ, and earnestly ask Him to make himself known to us by his word and Spirit, to shed abroad his love in our hearts by the Holy Spirit; and rest not, night or day, until in the spirit of adoption we can look

up to Him in love, and say in truth, "My Father." Though we may have, up till this moment, never opened our heart to God, but shut it against Him, and found misery, let not terror for God -- the holy, pure, and just God -- keep us away from Him any longer. What is it which God hates in us? Is it not our enmity to Him? And does not his anger against our enmity measure his desire to possess our love? He loves us, and *therefore* desires us to love Him in return. It is true that He has pronounced a curse upon our wickedness, which, unless removed, must end in our final ruin. This is righteous. But it is also true that Jesus was made a curse for us -- that He died for our sins; and the language which every one who knows the good will of God towards us as sinners is entitled to address to us, is this -- and with these words we end our appeal -- "God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For He hath made Him sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. We then, as workers together with Him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain!" "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you,

according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.” -- Editor.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

### "HE WENT THROUGH A DEN OF LIONS"

THE men that envied and hated Daniel, when he was placed by king Darius at the head of affairs in Babylon, would have been very glad if they had been able to find any fault with the way in which he managed the government. But he was so very faithful and upright and active, and everything went so well, that they saw they could never accuse him of wrongdoing in his office. After keen and constant watch, they could not detect the least error in anything he did. So they said to each other, Unless we can find some way of entangling him in connection with the service of his God, we shall be utterly unable to bring him down in the king's esteem; let us try to frame some plan for catching him.

Now, they all knew that Daniel was in the habit of praying to the Lord God of Israel. They had watched him too closely not to have become aware of this. They felt sure, also, that it would not be an easy thing to make him give up praying. If they could, therefore, draw the king into

making a decree against all praying, except to himself, for a month, they might certainly conclude that Daniel would disobey, and a punishment might be devised that would get them rid of him. Glad to have hit on this plot, these bad men went in haste to the king, and told him that in order to do him honour, all the presidents and princes of the realm had been consulting with each other, and had resolved to ask him to issue a decree, that no person in the kingdom should offer a petition to either god or man, except to the king himself, for the space of thirty days. The king was caught in the net of their flatteries. It sounded well to be named as the only person from whom favours could be asked for a month. What a grand height of honour and glory he would be standing! So without thinking, like one whose head was turned with fair words, he put his seal to a writing which made it law in all the kingdom, that for thirty days no one was to pray to any god or man, except the king; and if any one should dare to disobey the decree, he was to be cast alive into the lions' den. The bad men left the king's presence, rejoicing in the success of their scheme, and not doubting at all that Daniel would disregard the proclamation; and then they would charge him with his crime before Darius, and have him thrown to the lions, when there would be an end of him.

They were quite right in thinking that the prophet would not stop praying, for the king's decree. There was a

King, higher than Darius, whom he had served and prayed to all his life, and he will not leave off now. As to the foolish and bad law that had been made, God's highest law was against it, and he must obey God rather than men. If he must die for doing so, he will leave himself with God. So, just as he had been in the habit of doing before, Daniel went home to his house, after he knew that the decree had been signed; and three times a day, with his window open towards Jerusalem, he kneeled and prayed to the living God. His enemies had gathered together to watch him, and were right glad when they saw him on his knees. He has broken the law, they said, and we will now take advantage of that to have him killed. They were not long in going to the king, to tell him what they had seen. They began in this way, not letting their design be known at first. Did not you, O king, they said, make a law that if any person should ask any thing from god or man, except yourself, for thirty days, he should be cast into the den of lions? The king said it was true he had done so; and as the laws of the Medes and Persians never were altered, the decree was a thing which must stand without change. Well, said they, there is a man in your kingdom that pays no attention to it. That captive Jew, Daniel, regards not his king's word, but, as if in defiance of it, prays to his God three times a day. Let him have his doom.

No sooner had the king heard these words, than the whole plot was plain to him. He saw how he had been caught in a snare. He was very angry with himself for yielding to the flattery of his courtiers, and framing a decree which he now knew to have been aimed at the life of his servant. He was determined to save Daniel if he could. So the whole day he tried to discover some plan by which he might deliver him, or soften his enemies' rage. But he tried in vain. The men always said, You cannot change the law; the statutes of the Medes are never altered. Daniel must go to the lions.

The poor king saw that there was no help for it. With a sore heart he called for Daniel, and gave orders that he should be thrown into the den. By this time it was evening, and the wild beasts were hungry. The king, however, would not lose hope even yet; he knew that Daniel's God had done very wonderful things before, and he felt somehow that he would protect his servant. So, as they were casting the prophet into the den, Darius said to him, Your God whom you serve so constantly will help you, and save you. Then he made them bring a large stone, and lay it on the mouth of the den, and he sealed it with his own signet, and the signet of his great lords, that no one should interfere with the sentence that had been executed on Daniel. The enemies of the prophet thought they had gained their end,

and went to their houses rejoicing that he was got rid of, and would not stand in their way any more.

It was very different with the king. He returned to his palace with a very heavy heart. He could not sleep; he would not eat; neither would he let them sing or play to him. He kept awake, and fasted, and grieved all the night. As soon as there was the least peep of day, he got up from his couch, and went as fast as he could to the lions' den. He wanted to know if Daniel was yet alive. He crept close to the den's mouth, and with a sad voice, called out, O Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God saved you? has he delivered you from the lions? are you still living? He did not need to wait for an answer. At once a cheerful voice spoke up from the den: O king, My God sent down his angel last night to shut the lions' mouths, and not one of them has hurt me. He knew that I was an innocent man, and that I had done thee, O king, no wrong. It was all as Daniel had said. The lions had lain about him, all the long night through, like as many lambs.

You may be sure the king was wondrously glad to hear Daniel's voice. He would not let him remain long in the den. He called his attendants, and they rolled away the stone and took the prophet out of the wild beasts' lair. And when he stood before the king, every one saw that he was quite unhurt. There was not a touch of a lion's claw on his very dress, not a scratch on all his person. What will his



enemies think and say now? Ah! their joy is turned into mourning very suddenly. For now that Daniel is safe, the king resolved that their wicked plot should come on their own heads. He sent for them, and gave orders to cast them and their families into the den from which the prophet had been taken. The hungry beasts sprung at them at once, tearing and mangling and crunching them; breaking all their bones in pieces, before ever they got to the bottom of the den. “They made a pit, and digged it, and are fallen into the ditch which they made.”

After this Daniel continued high in favour with Darius, and lived to see his successor Cyrus on the throne. God gave him also visions of things which were to come, and directed him to write them; and they make part of the holy scriptures. Once an angel came to him, and saluted him from God, with a very blessed title. He said to him, O man greatly beloved! Very pleasant, too, are the words spoken to him and written at the very close of his prophecies. They may well conclude this story. “Go thou thy way till the end be; for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.”

-----

## QUESTIONS ON THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Who was it that, being a captive and a slave, rose from faithfulness in a prison to a place of honour and trust next the king on the throne?

2. Who was it that made a resolve to pray to God morning, noon and night? and where is his resolution written?

3. Can you give an example of endeavours made by Christ's enemies to ensnare him, so as to get matter of accusation against him?

4. What king was awfully rebuked for listening to words of fulsome flattery?

5. Where have we an account of vain prayers offered to an idol-god?

6. Who was it that would not stop preaching at the bidding of men, just as Daniel would not stop praying?

7. In what psalm do we find proof how fondly captives in Babylon thought of Jerusalem?

8. Who was it that tried to deliver an innocent person, by changing the mind of his accusers, but was always met with the same cry for his death?

9. Who was it that hoped to see a dear one alive even after he should be killed?

10. Where do we read of the sealing of a great stone, for fear that the place whose mouth it closed should be entered?

11. Who were those persons that having accomplished their designs, like Daniel's enemies, were very joyful for a time, while others, like Darius, sorely mourned?

12. Do you remember another instance of a king being unable to sleep? How did he pass the sleepless hours?

13. When was a lion's mouth shut after it had killed a man?

14. Who was it that, being cast into a deeper place than the lions' den, found a devouring mouth opened, yet was saved from death?

15. Who in the New Testament is spoken of as specially loved by his Lord?

ANSWERS to the foregoing questions will be found by consulting the following chapters: -- Gen. xxxix. and xli.; Ps. lv.; Matt. xxii; Acs xii.; 1 Kings xviii.; Acts iv. and v.; Ps. cxxxviii; Luke xxiii.; Heb. xi.; Matt. xxvii.; John xvi.; Esther vi.; 1 Kings xiii.; Jonah i. and ii.; John xxi.

-----

### *Prayer.*

O God, by whose grace all the excellent of the earth have been what they have been, help us to do the duties of our place faithfully, whether as children towards our parents, and brothers and sisters at home, or as scholars towards

our companions and teachers at school. Make us trustworthy and diligent in humble walks of life, that if we reach higher, we may be upright and true in these also. May we always look to Thee in prayer for the help we need in every duty. If we should ever be tried by temptation to please men rather than Thee, O keep us from yielding. May He who always did the things that pleased Thee, teach us and lead us in His own steps. O God, frustrate the plans of bad men against Thy people; bring their devices to nothing. And save us from that devourer of whom Thy word speaks as going about, like a roaring lion, seeking for prey. May we through Thy abundant grace live and prosper in the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever. *Amen.*

-----

## EVENING WORSHIP.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who dost govern all things in heaven and earth, mercifully hear the supplication of Thy people, and so rule and guide us that we may do our duties faithfully in our several places and relations; constantly abhorring that which is evil, and cleaving to that

which is good; being fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, and continuing instant in prayer, so that we may enjoy Thy peace all the days of our life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm xxiv.* 7-10.

CHRIST, the Lord, is risen to-day,  
Sons of men, and angels, say:  
Raise your songs and triumphs high:  
Sing, ye heavens, and earth reply.

Love's redeeming work is done;  
Fought the fight, the battle won.  
Lo! Our Sun's eclipse is o'er;  
Lo! He sets in blood no more.

Vain the stone, the watch the seal,  
Christ hath burst the gates of hell,  
Death, in vain, forbids Him rise:  
Christ hath opened Paradise.

Lives again our glorious King:  
Where O Death, is now thy sting?

Once He died our souls to save:  
Where's thy victory, O Grave:

Soar we now where Christ hath led,  
Following our exalted Head;  
Made like Him, like Him we rise:  
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies.

Hail! The Lord of earth and heaven;  
Praise to Thee by both be given.  
Thee we greet triumphant now:  
Hail! The Resurrection, Thou!

#### JOHN XI. 1-44.

NOW a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. 2. (It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother was sick.) 3, Therefore his sisters went unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick. 4. When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby. 5. Now Jesus loved Marth, and her sister, and Lazarus. 6. When he heard

therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was. 7. Then after that saith he to his disciples, Let us go into Judea again. 8. His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goes thou thither again? 9. Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. 10. But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him. 11. These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth: but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. 12. Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. 13. Howbeit Jesus spake of his death; but they thought that he had spoken of taking a rest in sleep. 14. Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. 15. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent that ye may believe; nevertheless, let us go unto him. 16. Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellow-disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him. 17. Then when Jesus came, he found that he had lain in the grave four days already. 18. Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off: 19. And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. 20. Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat still in the house. 21. Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been

here, my brother had not died. 22. But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee. 23. Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. 24. Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. 25. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: 26. And whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die. Believest thou this? 27. She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world. 28. And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee. 29. As soon as she heard that she arose quickly, and came unto him. 30. Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Marth met him. 31. The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there. 32. Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. 33. When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled, 34. And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see. 35. Jesus wept. 36. Then said the Jews, Behold



how he loved him! 37. And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died? 38. Jesus therefore again, groaning in himself, cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. 39. Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days. 40. Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God? 41. Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. 42. And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. 43. And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. 44. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

#### LUKE VII. 11-17.

AND it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain: and many of his disciples went with him, and

much people. 12. Now, when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. 13. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. 14. And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man I say unto thee Arise. 15. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother. 16. And there came a fear on all, and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and That God hath visited his people. 17. And this rumour of him went forth throughout all Judea, and throughout all the region round about.

-----

*Prayer.*

O MOST holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity! Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! Three Persons and one God, our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier; our Lord, our Governor, and Father! hear us, and have mercy upon us.

O Lord our Saviour! God and man; who, having assumed our nature, by Thy sufferings, death and burial,

wast made a ransom to take away the sins of the world; who, being raised from the dead, ascended and glorified, art made Head over all things to the church: we beseech Thee to hear us, and have mercy upon us. Make sure to us our calling and election, our unfeigned faith and repentance; that being justified and made the sons of God, we may have peace with Him as our reconciled God and Father.

Let Thy Holy Spirit sanctify us, and dwell in our hearts, and cause us to deny ourselves, and to give ourselves entirely to Thee.

As the world was created for Thy glory, let Thy name be glorified throughout the world. Let self-love and pride, and vain-glory be destroyed. Make us to love Thee, fear Thee, and trust in Thee with all our hearts, and live to thee. Let all mankind subject themselves to Thee, their King. Let the kingdoms of the world become the kingdoms of the Lord, and of His Christ. Let atheists, idolaters, Mohammedans, Jews and all ungodly people be converted. Send forth meet labourers into the harvest, preserve and bless them in their work, and let the gospel be preached throughout all the world. Unite all Christians in Jesus Christ, the true and only universal Head, in the true Christian and Catholic faith and love. Cast out heresies and corruptions, heal divisions; let the strong receive the weak, and bear their infirmities.

Have mercy upon our rulers let them fear Thee, and be examples of piety and temperance, haters of injustice, covetousness, and pride, and defenders of the innocent. Let every soul be subject to the higher powers, and not resist; let them obey all in authority, not only for wrath, but for conscience' sake.

Give all Thy churches able, holy, faithful pastors, that may soundly and diligently preach Thy word, and guide Thy flock in ways of righteousness and peace. Keep us from atheism, idolatry, and rebellion against thee; from infidelity, ungodliness, and sensuality; from security, presumption, and despair. Keep us from murder and violence, and hurtful, passionate words and actions. Keep us from all uncleanness; from injustice, false witness, and deceit; from slander and uncharitable censure. Keep us from coveting anything that is our neighbour's. Cause us to love Christ in His members with a pure and fervent love; to love our enemies, and to do good to all.

Give us needful sustenance, and contentment therewith. Bless our labours, and the fruits of the earth in their season; and send us such temperate weather as may tend thereunto. Deliver all Thy servants from sickness, want or other distresses, that would hinder them from Thy service. When we sin, restore us by true repentance and faith in Christ. May we loathe ourselves for our transgressions; forgive them all, and accept us in Thy

well-beloved Son. Save us from the punishment that our sins deserve. Convert our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers. Cause us to watch against temptation, to resist and overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil. Defend us and all Thy people from the enmity and rage of Satan; and preserve us to Thy heavenly kingdom. For Thou only art the universal King; all power is Thine in heaven and in earth; of Thee, and through Thee, and to Thee are all things; and the glory shall be Thine forever. *Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

#### *Morning.*

**Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.**

And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible.

I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I not as one that beateth the air;

But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

1 Cor. ix. 24, 25, 26, 27.

#### *Evening.*

**I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong.**

O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! Who hast set thy glory above the heavens.

Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.

And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:

That no flesh should glory in his presence.

Eccl. ix. 11      Ps. viii. 1, 2      1 Cor. i. 28, 29.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**My people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me.**

Oh that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways!

I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries.

The haters of the Lord should have submitted themselves unto him: but their time should have endured for ever.

He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat: and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee.

Ps. lxxxi. 11, 13, 14, 15, 16.

*Evening.*

**How oft did they provoke him in the wilderness, and grieve him in the desert!**

Yea, they turned back, and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel.

Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.

Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

Do not err, my beloved brethren.

Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the ingrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

Ps. lxxviii. 40, 41. 1 Cor. x. 6. James i. 15, 16, 21.

## WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: For there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about.**

Put ye in the sickle; for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow: for their wickedness is great.

Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision.



The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining.

The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake.

Joel iii. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16.

*Evening.*

**And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds, with great power and glory.**

And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.

In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will;

That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.

In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed.

Mark xiii. 26, 27.      Eph. i. 11, 12, 13.

**THURSDAY.**

*Morning.*

**I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God besides me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me.**

That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me: I am the Lord, and there is none else.

They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat; for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock; and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord.

Isa. xiv. 5, 6.      Isa. lxv. 22, 25.

*Evening.*

**Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.**

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ;

To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved.

Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself.

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Eph. i. 2, 3, 6, 9. Eph. ii. 8, 9.

## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**Hear my prayer, O Lord; give ear to my supplications in thy faithfulness answer me, and in thy righteousness.**

And enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.

For the enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath smitten my life down to the ground: he hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead.

I stretch forth my hands unto thee: my soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land.

Ps. cxliii. 1, 2, 3, 6.

*Evening.*

**For by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.**

For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.

For he shall have judgement without mercy that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.

Gal. ii. 16. Rom. i. 17. James ii. 10, 12, 13.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.**

The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.

I opened my mouth, and panted: for I longed for thy commandments.

Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name.

Matt. xi. 25. Ps. cxix. 130, 131, 132.

*Evening.*

**For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.**

Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience,  
when your obedience is fulfilled.

Do ye look on things after the outward appearance? If  
any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of  
himself think this again, that, as he is Christ's even so are  
we Christ's.

2 Cor. x. 4, 5, 6, 7.

# HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

## FORTY-FIRST WEEK.

### MORNING WORSHIP.

ETERNAL God, we thank Thee that Thou hast renewed to us our lives and Thy mercies this morning. We now ask Thy aid and blessings in entering on a new day. Thou that hast been about our bed by night, be about our path by day. We need Thee more by day than by night. The dangers of the night are many and great, but the dangers of the day are more and greater. The dangers of the night assail the body, but the dangers of the day assault and hurt the soul. We therefore pray Thee to keep us this day, both outwardly and in our bodies, and inwardly in our souls, to serve Thee both in body and soul, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.  
*Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* xcvi. 6-10.

HARK! it is the sabbath-day;  
Distant echoes faintly swell,

Rising like a plaintive lay  
From sabbath-morning bell;  
Then declining, till they cease,  
All is hush'd in sabbath peace.

In devotion here I kneel,  
Finding here my place of prayer;  
Angels all around I feel,  
O sweet dawn and balmy air!  
By myself, yet not alone,  
Worship I before Thy throne.

While upon the earth I rest,  
Heav'n, though far, is yet brought nigh;  
In communion with the blest,  
Blending earth with yonder sky.  
Through the vail a way is riven,  
Vistas opening into heaven!

1 Kings XVIII. 21-39.

AND Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered

him not a word. 22. Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the Lord; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifteen men. 23. Let them therefore give us two bullocks: and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: 24. And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the Lord: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken. 25. And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress it first; for ye are many; and call on the name of your gods, but put no fire under. 26. And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made. 27. And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud; for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked. 28. And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them. 29. And it came to pass, when midnight was past, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice, nor any



way to answer, nor any that regarded. 30. And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him: and he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down. 31. And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the Lord came, saying, Israel shall be thy name, &c.

-----

*Prayer.*

ALMIGHTY God, our Father and our Friend through Jesus Christ our Saviour, we humbly beseech Thee to hear us, and to accept our prayer, while we now present ourselves before Thy throne. We have sinned against heaven, and before Thee, and are no more worthy to be called Thy children. Enable us in an earnest and true spirit of repentance to acknowledge our transgressions, and to implore Thy forgiveness. Permit us in humble faith to cast our burden upon the Lord, the great sacrifice for sin; and dispose our hearts to set forth anew to-day, casting away the works of darkness, and putting upon us the armour of light. O Lord our God, we plead for all the children of sorrow and affliction; for all that are this day in any trouble

or distress, of mind, body or estate. We pray Thee to shed the bright beams of thy love upon all dark and desolate hearts, and to pour the balm of thy sweet comfort upon the minds of any of Thy children that are afflicted. May the Eternal God be their refuge, and lay underneath them the everlasting arms of His mercy and protection. Upbear them amid waves and storms; feed and nourish the youth of the flock during the season of their spiritual infancy; strengthen those that are weak-hearted and feeble-minded; arouse the careless, and especially those who are waxing cold in faith, and love, and prayer. On this Thy holy sabbath visit Thy people with Thy sacred presence, and with Thy Holy Spirit. May that Spirit guide us into all truth, and sanctify us wholly, and make us meet for the rest that remaineth for the people of God. O, may the dispensations of Thy providence lead us more and more near to Thee; let the discipline of Thy will concerning us chasten our spirit, wean us from the world, and make us more heavenly-minded. May the holy and sacred privileges of Thy gospel edify our hearts, and advance us day by day a further state toward heaven. Be Thou in the midst of every dwelling-place of Sion, and in all her assemblies this day -- ever present to bless Thy people, according to Thy promise. O Thou, only Source of wisdom, teach the teachers, empower Thy ministers, give them wise and understanding hearts; and to all Thy people give Thy heavenly grace, that they may receive with meekness the

engrafted word, and that the seed sown may be as the good seed planted in the good ground, and bring forth fruit abundantly to Thy praise and glory. Take from us all hardness of heart; and especially save us from the contempt of Thy word and commandment. Impart to us each day more and more of Thy Holy Spirit, as the quickening and sanctifying life of the soul, preparing it on earth for its inheritance in heaven. And may the savour of this day be “of life unto life,” food for the coming week, supplying strength and principle, that we may live as we ought to live, while set in the midst of so many and great dangers. And when our days are ended, and our course is run, may death (for all must die) become to us the gate of bliss, the entrance-gate of immortality. Teach us, O Lord, that we are born to live, that we live to die, and that we die to live for evermore. Grant us every blessing, and every needful gift and grace through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O GOD of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob, bless all of us thy servants, and sow the seed of eternal life in our hearts, that whatsoever in Thy holy word we shall

profitably learn, we may in deed fulfil the same. Give unto us Thy salvation, Lord. Keep our hearts in perfect peace, our minds being stayed upon Thee. Give us pardon of our sins, and the comfort of Thy free Spirit. So shall we praise Thee with joyful lips, and magnify Thy glorious name for ever and ever. To Thee, O Father, with the Son, and with the Holy Ghost, be all praise and glory, now and ever more. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* xlv. 1-7.

THERE stands amid the sea a rock,  
The waves dash round its crested form,  
Broken in fragments by the shock  
And fury of the raging storm;  
And yet though high the billows be,  
The rock stands rooted in the sun.

Upon the mountain top a tower  
Looks down upon the vale below;  
The clouds, o'ercasting more and more,  
With stormy wind and tempest blow;  
Yet not a stone of that bold tower  
But stands as it had stood before.

Once more doth storm its head uprear,  
A tempest sweeps along the plain;  
A leafy tree is rooted there --  
That storm brings winter back again;  
The leaves obey the tempest's will;  
The tree abides, deep-rooted still.

Our God is faithful to his flock,  
His love is equal to his power;  
He stands unshaken as the rock,  
Abides unmoved as that strong tower.  
His bloom and blossom never cease,  
'Mid winds and storm He whispers--Peace!

#### DEUTERONOMY XXXIII. 1-27.

AND this is the blessing wherewith Moses the man of God blessed the children of Israel before his death. 2. And he said, The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand went a fiery law for them. 3. Yea, he loved the people; all his saints are in thy hand: and they sat down at thy feet; every one shall receive of thy words. 4. Moses commanded us a law, even

the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob. 5. And he was king in Jeshurun, when the heads of the people and the tribes of Israel were gathered together. 6. Let Reuben live, and not die; and let not his men be few. 7. And this is the blessing of Judah: and he said, Hear, Lord, the voice of Judah, and bring him unto his people; let his hands be sufficient for him; and be thou an help to him from his enemies. 8. And of Levi he said, Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy holy one, whom thou didst prove at Massah, and with whom, thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah; 9. Who said unto his father, and to his mother, I have not seen him; neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor knew his own children; for they have observed thy word, and kept thy covenant. 10. They shall teach Jacob thy judgments, and Israel thy law: they shall put incense before thee, and whole burnt-sacrifice upon thine altar. 11. Bless, Lord, his substance, and accept the work of his hands: smite through the loins of them that rise against him, and of them that hate him, that they rise not again. 12. And of Benjamin he said, The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him; and the Lord shall dwell in safety by him; and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders. 13. And of Joseph he said, Blessed of the Lord be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath, 14. And for the precious fruits brought forth by

the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon, 15. And for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills, 16. And for the precious things of the earth, and fulness thereof, and for the good will of him that dwelt in the bush: let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren. 17. His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of unicorns; with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth: and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh. 18 And of Zebulon he said, Rejoice, Zebulon, in thy going out; and Issachar, in thy tents. 19. They shall call the people unto the mountain; there they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness; for they shall suck of the abundance of the seas, and of treasures hid in the sand. 20. And of Gad he said, blessed be he that enlargeth Gad: he dwelleth as a lion, and teareth the arm with the crown of the head. 21. And he provided the first part for himself, because there, in a portion of the law-giver, was he seated; and he came with the heads of the people, he executed the justice of the Lord, and his judgments with Israel. 22. And of Dan he said, Dan is a lion's whelp: he shall leap from Bashan. 23. And of Naphtali he said, O Naphtali, satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the Lord; possess thou the west and the south. 24. And of Asher he said, Let

Asher be blessed with children; let him be acceptable to his brethren, and let him dip his foot in oil. 25. Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be. 26. There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. 27. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee, and shall say, Destroy them.

-----

## SERMON XLI.

“THE ETERNAL GOD IS THY REFUGE, AND UNDERNEATH ARE  
THE EVERLASTING ARMS.”

-- Deut. xxxiii. 27

THIS text, which is to occupy our attention at present, is one of those oft-interspersed passages and edifying sentiments which here and there occur in the historical books of the Old Testament, and which, for their richness and depth of meaning, so amply repay the diligent student of those portions of Holy Writ. The historical Scriptures are too often and too systematically overlooked, and a great loss is thereby incurred. Amid the mere details, and at



intervals throughout the genealogies, and pedigrees, and histories of men and generations, we find such precious truths and promises as that of the text -- great golden nuggets for those who search in the prolific vein of the inspired word, hid pearls dug out of the deep soil, green spots for the soul to feed upon, and such as are particularly refreshing to the hungry and the thirsty soul that seeks the Manna and the Rock for spiritual food and spiritual drink. In this delightful sentiment of to-day we have an expression of all that is good and true and hopeful in the covenant of God in Christ with man.

Those who meet together for purposes of religious worship and edification ought to cultivate a certain measure of “curiosity” (of a right sort) in their attendance on the means of grace, both public and domestic, each worshipper presenting himself before the Lord in the spirit of anxious expectancy: -- “I wonder whether my soul will receive comfort from this day’s service? Will the hymns that are sung express my wants or my joys? Will the text be a promise to encourage me, or a command to discipline me, or an admonition to correct me? Whether shall I have enough food administered or shall I remain unsatisfied and unedified?” Such thoughts as these in our assemblies would infuse new life into our services; there would be the suspense of expectation, a desire for food, a vivacity and liveliness throughout all the exercises of the day, which

would be sure to bring down a great blessing from on high, to the refreshment of our souls.

Well, here, at all events, is a copious promise -- “The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.” Great Promiser! make good Thy gracious promise unto us to-day! If any of us be weary and faint in our minds, and need much of Thy sweet comfort, through means of that promise grant us some of the joy of thy salvation!

The text is part of the blessing which Moses at the last bestowed upon the tribes of Israel. Before he ascended to his lofty death-bed on the mount, he delivered his dying message to his people. In speaking these, Moses was a prophet, and his utterances were prophetic, peculiarly and individually belonging to the tribes, in their temporal and spiritual interests. But all these belong to us also.

Scripture history, scripture death-beds, scripture blessings, and scripture sentiments, are common property, belonging to all of us. It is not so in ordinary experience: a blessing pronounced upon me does not belong to you; and a deathbed benediction on you does not belong to me. Each man's history is his own, and no one else's. But the Scriptures, and all that they contain, are for all the world --

“Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning.” The blessing of the Spirit of God covers all. Though spoken originally to others, the promises of

God are opened to us, and serve as stepping-stones across the flood, sure places on which we may set our feet, and be established in our goings. This blest promise of our text is one of these.

There are two kinds of promise here: One that is strong, and brave, and valiant, and heroic -- “The eternal God is thy refuge:” and the other, tender, delicate, and sympathetic -- “Underneath are the everlasting arms.” To one class of minds the one commends itself, and to another class is the other more adapted, in proportion as the spiritual strength is great or small, stronger or weaker. And it is well to make a difference; there ought to be a classification of promises; for, as in all the other scriptures, so in this, there is “milk for babes,” and “strong meat” for those who by reason of age are able to bear it. To the bolder spirits a promise would need to be in the form of a watchword, a war-cry, a rallying-shout, as the shout of a king in their camp. To the more sensitive Christian the promise must come as a tender thought, as a still small voice, as “a word in season to them that are weary.” Different minds must needs be approached in different ways. Some, like the strong warriors of Gideon, amid the din of battle, the breaking of the pitchers, the flame of burning torches, and the battle shout, would need to be addressed with a voice loud as the voice of a trumpet; whereas there are others of God’s children, who, like those

that are sad and pensive and pining on beds of sickness, must be approached gently, and spoken to in soft whispers of sympathy and love. Both of these classes are included in this promise.

I. "The eternal God is thy refuge." This is the bolder, grander, stronger promise, given to them that are bold and strong. "The eternal God!" Know ye in whom ye have trusted? No mere idol, no vain imagination, not a God made with men's hands. Nay, but the God of gods, the eternal God, the God of heaven -- *He* is thy refuge! And with the eternity of his being, He is infinite in everything -- infinite in power, Omnipotent; infinite in knowledge, Omniscient; infinite in space, Omnipresent; over all, within all, all in all. This is the God who is our refuge; as the Psalmist expresses it -- The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower" (Ps. xviii. 2). Unto this we are to flee, and be safe. It is neither disgrace nor cowardice for the strong warrior to take refuge within the fortress. It is no part of the duty of the soldier to abide always in the field. There will be times of weakness, and exhaustion, and extraordinary danger, in which he will be more in the path of duty out of the field than in it. Even Samson aided his great natural strength by entrenching himself in the rock Etam. Almost all David's spiritual experiences, as expressed in the Psalms, have their

temporal counterpart in David's personal history; and as he had his seasons of temporal adversity and sorrow and disaster, and these were seasons of retirement from the fray, so is it in the spiritual history of every man -- from the battle to the "refuge," from the field to the rock of defence.

There is no illustration so bold as that of "the rock" -- the everlasting hills; so strong, because so deeply rooted; so safe, because so really impregnable; so secure, because so high and so far removed from the reach of danger. And in our God is all this -- strength, security, lastingness; and all that is lasting in Him is *ever*-lasting -- the Eternal God," eternal in wisdom, in goodness, in power, and in love. And as it is true that "the eternal God is our refuge," so it also means that God is our "eternal refuge." We are safe in Him to-day, safe in Him tomorrow, safe yesterday, to-day, and forever. It is a grand thing thus to trust in Him; not in the arm of flesh, not in the help of man, not in the face of clay, not in chariots or in horses, not in kings or princes, but *in the Lord*: "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty" (Ps. xci.1). "Under *the shadow*" -- What other shadow could thus protect us? "Under the shadow of his wings" -- What substance half so protective and defensive as this shadow? Oh, if the shadow be thus helpful, what must the substance be? If such be the abundance of the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim, what shall the vintage of Abiezer be?

II. And now, the portion of the promise appointed for the weak, the feeble, and the tender ones. We must know that while there are warriors who can take refuge in the stronghold, there are also those that are wounded and faint and weary, who can neither fight nor flee: What are they to do? Here the promise enters -- "Underneath are the everlasting arms!" The stronger men may walk, may run, may march, may flee unto the refuge; but the weak and wounded ones must be *carried*, and underneath them must be the carrying arms of the kindly bearers. If there is one word to express this condition it is the word -- "weakness." Now in the promise, "The eternal God is thy refuge," we seem to see suggested only the idea of strong walls, strong gates, strong defences, and strong defenders; but in the gentle promise -- "Underneath are the everlasting arms" -- we see the result of the carnage and strife; we see the ambulance, and within its curtains the weary limb, the blanched and pallid face, the bleeding wound, the throbbing heart, the fainting soul. O God, uphold our souls in days of sorrow, in hours of weakness, and in the fury of the fray. We trust in thy sweet promise -- "And underneath are the everlasting arms!" Let us feel this, let us know it, let us be persuaded of it, and it sufficeth, Lord! When consciously borne in Thine arms we can surely say -- "Thy will be done!" The peculiar phases of our spiritual weakness, in which we most need the assurance of this promise, are --

1. *Weakness of spiritual youth and infancy.* -- The infancy of the body is a time of weakness, and then we are borne and carried by the arms of the mother or the nurse placed underneath us. And so it is with spiritual infancy. It is a period of special need, and so it is also a period of special help. Babes in Christ are often exposed to trying temptation at home and abroad, within and without. May not Moses have had in mind the day of his own exposure and casting out, when as an infant he was committed to the waters of the river? And surely, if ever, it must have been then, that “underneath were the everlasting arms.” So it is with the spiritual infancy; there are spiritual Pharaohs, spiritual edicts, spiritual persecutions, spiritual foes. But though they be mighty, the Lord our God is mightier. Still, it is hard to realize the promise -- “as thy days, so shall thy strength be.” Young beginners are very earnest, and very zealous, and they think they ought to carry all before them -- temptations, sins, infirmities, and everything. They have yet to learn that this is a season of peculiar weakness, which must not be overtasked -- the extreme infancy of the soul. For such an age the “everlasting arms” are needed. And for such as these may be suggested that significant passage, expressive of God’s care of his people Israel -- “He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; He led him about, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her

nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him” (Deut. xxxii. 10-12). Here are the people of God in their national youth, upborne by God; fed as a child, without labour or toil; led as a child, by a Father’s hand; instructed as a child, by the visible lessons of a ceremonial religion. It is, indeed, the imagery of the great eagle teaching its young to fly. First of all she “stirreth up” the nest, that is, to make them feel uncomfortable, and to drive them out; she fluttereth over them, so as to provoke and teach them to follow her; she “spreadeth abroad her wings, and beareth them on her wings.” That is, the eagle plunges underneath her young ones, so as to protect them if their untried wing should prove unequal to the flight. They rise *from* her outspread wings in their attempt; and if they fail, and the wing is weak and weary, they alight *upon* her wings in their descent, and are safe. And even such are the “everlasting arms” to the young Christian -- strength in proportion to their day and to their need. The good shepherd will not overdrive the flock by a single stage (Gen. xxxiii. 13, 14), but He doth gently lead them, and still more gently carry them -- in his arms, close to his bosom: “Underneath are the everlasting arms.”

2. *Weakness of spirit.* -- There are such times in the Christian’s life, when the heart is faint, and the spiritual pulse but feebly beating; when the nights are dark and long,



and the days are sad and dreary, and faith and hope and love wax cold toward Jesus. Spiritually it is this state of health -- "The whole head is sick, the whole heart faint." What is to be done then? Whence is strength to be sought? "Underneath are the everlasting arms." Therefore saith the Psalmist -- "Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe" (cxix.117); and again, "Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not" (xvii. 5). And where is there strength for this like the arm of our God? Thou fainting spirit, thou fainting soul, awake, revive! "Underneath thee are the everlasting arms!"

3. *Weakness in prayer.* -- Moses may have had his own experience again in mind, that day of Amalek when his hands were weak, and how the fortune of battle answered to the upholding of his hands in prayer (Exod. xvii. 11). On that occasion his brethren upheld his hands, a foretaste of the power of Christian communion; but there is no aid, and no upholding like that of the "everlasting arms." All else must fail, but these never. There are many temptations and inducements that come upon us to make us weak in prayer. This is to relax our grasp of the sceptre, and to cease to wrestle. Let us beware of this; it is spiritual weakness; if yielded to, it will make us more weak; and cold, formal, heartless prayer is an abomination in the sight of God. Much of the Christian's strength in prayer may be sustained by oft-uttered ejaculations, thoughts, wishes, sent up to

heaven. Wherever we may be, whatever we may be engaged in, the heart may surely be lifted up in a passing prayer. It is like the flight of a bird, which may be a distant flight, across a continent or across the main; but it assists the weary wing by oft alighting on a branch of a tree, or on the bosom of the wave. It may be but for a moment, but that moment renews its strength, and gives rest to the sole of its weary foot. Thus may we assist our spirit by oft snatches of prayer, every one of which would enable us to touch the throne of the Eternal, and rest upon the “everlasting arms.”

4. *Weakness in death.* -- “My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever” (Ps. lxxiii. 26). In this hour of bodily weakness, in this assault of the last enemy, this gracious promise is indeed manifested in loving graciousness -- “Underneath are the everlasting arms.” Satan often tries to seize upon this last time to disturb the dying Christian with doubts and temptations; but God is ever true to his promise, and never more so than at this trying hour. If ever there is a time that Jesus is near his people, it is then. Angels were nearest to Jesus in his most trying seasons -- in the Temptation, the Agony, and the Crucifixion. And is it not wonderful the glory that is imparted to the sunset of man’s day, and the vigour communicated at the end of his journey? Hence our encouragement -- “For which cause we faint not; but

though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day” (2 Cor. iv. 16).

So that, whether in life or in death, the child of God has this covenant promise of his covenant-keeping God -- “The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.” We need add no more than this further guarantee of all God’s promises (and therefore of this one), that in Christ they are “Yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us” (2 Cor. i. 20).

“O Father-Eye that hath so truly watch’d,  
O Father-Hand that hath so gently led,  
O Father-Heart, that by my prayer is touch’d,  
That loved me first when I was cold and dead;  
Still do Thou lead me on, with faithful care,  
The narrow path to heaven, where I would go;  
And train me for the life that waits me there,  
Alike through love and loss, through weal and wo.”

R. MAGUIRE, M.A.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

### HOW AN ORPHAN STRANGER CAME TO BE A QUEEN.

THE kings of Persia, once on a time, were very rich and great monarchs. They ruled over a very wide empire, and were much feared for their power. One of them, who lived at the time when the story happened of which I am now to tell, has in scripture the long name of Ahasuerus. The story is about a little Jewish girl that came to be his queen.

Ahasuerus had resolved to make a feast, the like of which had never been before in his dominions. He called to the feast all his princes and nobles and great men, and they kept the revels up for half-a-year. Never was such a time. After this, the king made a feast for the whole people of the city where the palace was, and the court of the royal gardens was turned into a gorgeous banqueting-hall. You never saw such a display of gold and silver, and marble, and silks -- curtains, and carpets, and couches, and cords and tassels of all colours -- all arranged on a beautiful mosaic pavement, till it looked like a palace in fairy-land. The meats too, were in great abundance, and the wine flowed as free as streams do.

Now the king had a very beautiful lady for his queen, and while her husband was giving a feast to the lords and noblemen, she was entertaining the women in another part of the palace. For in those days, in the east, and indeed to

the present time, the ladies and gentlemen did not dine together. So while the separate feasting was going forward, the king being very merry, and recollecting that his queen was an exceedingly beautiful person, began to think he would like to show her in all her royal splendour to the people. That was a thing which, according to the custom of those times, he would never have thought of, if he had not been made vain and foolish by the feasting and the flattery around him. But in his present mood he did not think of what was fit, and sent seven officers to bring the queen, with her crown on her head, to let the people see how lovely she was. The queen heard the message, but she thought it so wrong and unworthy, that she would not pay attention to it. So the seven lords came back and told the king, that Queen Vashti, (for that was her name) had said she would not come. The king, when he heard this, was extremely angry to think that any one should refuse to obey him, and that one his own wife.

In this angry mood he sent for the wise men of the court, who knew the laws of the kingdom, and asked them what would be the proper thing to do to punish Vasti's disobedience. I daresay they saw already what the king would like them to say. They advised, therefore, that Vashti should have the crown taken from her, and be no more queen. Let another lady, they said, be made queen in her place, and the whole people shall know that the king is

determined to make all wives do honour to their husbands, and keep good order in the land. The king thought the advice good, and he made letters be written and sent into all the empire, stating his purpose, and saying that it was for the good of all families, and to teach that every man was to rule in his own house. The proud king did not know about Christ's law of love, and of ruling by serving.

Queen Vashti being thus put from her place as the king's favourite wife (for in those countries and times they did not know God's law as to having only one), it became needful that another should be chosen in her stead. So a great many beautiful young ladies were brought to the palace, that the king might choose from among them one whom he liked best. Now, among the young women that were thus taken to the palace was a very lovely Jewish maiden, who was good as well as beautiful. She was an orphan; her father and mother had been taken captive out of the land of Judea, and had died in the stranger's country, leaving little Hadassah behind them. An uncle of hers, called Mordecai, who had also been made captive, took the orphan child after that to his house, and brought her up as if she had been his own daughter. He was very fond of her, and she loved him in return very much. He lived in the city where the king's palace was, and saw all the feasting and jollity that had ended in putting away the queen.

The people that had care of the maidens while they waited in the palace to see who should be the king's choice, were greatly pleased with Haddassah, she was so gentle and winning and easy to please. The king, also, was quite taken with this beautiful Jewess, and resolved to make her his queen. He did not know, indeed, that she was a Jewess; but he probably would not have minded that, if he had known it, he was so much delighted with her. Everybody that heard Hadassah was to be queen was equally pleased. Her name was changed to Esther, or Star; and she was indeed the star of the king's palace. Another feast was held in great splendour, and all the kingdom was made to know that Esther had been put in Vashti's place.

About this time a thing happened at court, that had much to do with after occurrences in this story. There were two servants of the king that made a plot to lay hold on him, and take his life. But Mordecai the queen's uncle, who had now a post of trust in the palace, keeping the entrance, came to know of their design, and told Esther about it. Of course she let her husband know, and the two traitors were arrested. Search was made for proof, and when it was found out that they really had plotted against the king, they were both hanged. An account of the whole affair was also ordered to be written in the annals of the king's reign, which were regularly kept in a book in the palace.

Another thing happened at this time also, out of which the occurrences of the after story grew. There was a courtier of the name of Haman, who began to rise in the king's favour. From one post to another this man was promoted, till there was no other in the palace that got the same honour with himself. The king gave orders that all the servants, whenever Haman passed out or in by the gates of the palace, should bow low when they met him, and do reverence to him, almost as they would to the king himself. There was only one person in the court that did not care for him. Mordecai the Jew, who sat as guardian of the gate, never bowed to him, but let him pass without any notice. The rest of the officers about the palace saw this, and wondered at it. They even spoke to Mordecai, and reminded him that the king had given orders to bow to Haman; but the Jew -- believing that it would be wrong to do it, either because such worship as was asked was due to God only, or for some other reason -- would not change his conduct, but let the favourite pass and repass without once doing him reverence. The other servants, angry, perhaps, that he had not minded their remonstrance, drew Haman's attention to Mordecai's neglect, and said to him that the man was a Jew, asking if he thought he should be allowed to keep his place? or if the king wanted to have people of that nation about him?



After this Haman constantly watched Mordecai, as he came in and went out through the doors of the palace, and was mortified and enraged when he saw that the Jew never once stirred from his place, or bowed to him, Every day his anger was made fiercer, till at last he could think of nothing else but the contempt shown him by this Mordecai. It was wonderful how this one little thing made all his grandeur seem to him as nothing. The king's favour, the flattery of others, the pride of his family in his great prosperity, were all of no consequence to him, so long as Mordecai would not bend the knee to him. He fretted about it continually, and began to plan a cruel revenge. He thought he would get rid not only of Mordecai, but of all of his nation, at a blow. He would wring his heart when he made him see that his refusal to bow to Haman, the king's favourite, was to be the death of all his kindred. Having, therefore, formed his scheme, he made the people of his house cast lots, to find out what would be a lucky time for carrying it into effect. He then went to the king, and began to tell him about the people of the Jews, what a singular, obstinate, dangerous, class of persons they were; and how it was not safe to let them continue any longer in Persia. He therefore suggested, that a decree should be issued for their destruction everywhere throughout the king's dominions. The king weakly consented, and an order was sent out commanding the slaughter of all Jews, old and young, on a

certain day, and giving all their property to their murderers. It was a cruel, wicked edict; but the bad man that planned it, thinking he would now get rid of Mordecai, sat merrily down to a feast with the king.

Neither of the two knew as yet that there was a Friend, mightier than they, watching over his captive people, who would deliver them from their enemies. How He brought it about that the bloody decree was never carried out, I must tell in the next story.

### QUESTIONS FROM THE BIBLE STORY.

1. What queen was it that, during a feast, gave good advice to a foolish king?
2. What royal person's wife was it that, during a feast, made a very wicked request of him?
3. What willing exile from her native land was it that, in a new country, married a great man, and became mother of a race of kings?
4. Who was it that was afraid and tried to protect himself by an equivocation, because his wife was very beautiful?
5. What wise men gave a king advice which he, foolishly, did not take?

6. Where do we find the duty of husbands stated by an apostle, according to Christ's mind and the law of love?

7. Who was it that chose a beautiful maiden to be wife to another, according to an answer that had been given to his prayer?

8. Who was it that got favour in the eyes of all that had to do with him, because he was prudent and kind, and the Lord was with him?

9. What two persons made a successful plot against a king's life, but in the end lost their own life by the deed?

10. What king was it that bade every one bow the knee to an honoured servant of his, who deserved all his master's confidence?

11. What king was it that, for the sake of making sure of one whom he feared, told his soldiers to kill many?

12. Where do you find in a letter a statement that the Jews were a very troublesome rebellious, people?

ANSWERS to the foregoing may be found by consulting the following chapters: -- Dan. v.; Matt. xiv; Ruth iv.; Gen. xii. and xxvi.; 1 Kings xii.; Eph. v.; Gen. xxiv.; Gen xxxix.; 2 Sam. iv. ; Gen. xli.; Matt. ii.; Ezra iv.

-----

*Prayer.*

O LORD, who hast by the word of Jesus taught us to call Thee our Father, be kind, as Thou hast graciously promised, to all orphans. Bless asylums where fatherless and motherless ones find a home. May the day soon come when these institutions will not be needed. Help all of us who have kind parents, or other near relatives who love and cherish us, to be thankful and loving to them. May we so act, in any place we may fill, as to please Thee, and win the approval of good men. Turn all plots of bad people against the righteous into foolishness, for the sake of Jesus Christ the righteous, to whom be glory for ever. *Amen.*

-----

## EVENING WORSHIP.

ALMIGHTY God, great author of our being, we Thy creatures would now present ourselves before Thee, to give Thee thanks for Thy good care of us during the day, and for the many privileges and opportunities we have enjoyed. Forgive us all our sins; create within us a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within us. May we now commit ourselves to Thy mighty keeping during the night. Watch over us, and with Thy great mercy keep us. When no other eye can see us, let Thine unwearied eye be upon us, for our protection and care. We humbly commit the keeping of ourselves, body, soul, and spirit, to Thy good providence, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* cxxxvi. 1-8, 23-26.

GOD, who madest earth and heaven,  
Darkness and light;  
Who the day for toil hast given,  
For rest the night;  
May thine angel-guards defend us,  
Slumber sweet thy mercy send us  
Holy dreams and hopes attend us,  
This live-long night.

Guard us waking, guard us sleeping;  
And, when we die,  
May we in thy mighty keeping  
All peaceful lie:  
When the last dread call shall wake us,  
Do not Thou our God forsake us,  
But to reign in glory take us  
With Thee on high.

#### JOHN XIII. 1-27.

NOW, before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. 2. And supper being ended, (the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him.) 3. Jesus knowing that the father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; 4. He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. 5. After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towels wherewith he was girded. 6. Then cometh he to

Simon Peter: and Peter said unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? 7. Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. 8. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. 9. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. 10. Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not, save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. 11. For he knew who should betray him, therefore said he, Ye are not all clean. 12. So, after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? 13. Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. 14. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one's another's feet. 15. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. 16. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. 17. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. 18. I speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me. 19. Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he. 20. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me. 21.

When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, That one of you shall betray me. 22. Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake, &c.

-----

*Prayer.*

ALMIGHTY God, Maker of all things, Judge of all men, we present ourselves before Thy throne this evening to make account before Thee of this day, and all its thoughts and words and deeds. All that has been pleasing unto Thee, accept as the free-will offering of our hearts; and all that is unworthy, do Thou cleanse with the precious blood of Jesus Christ. Sanctify us now, we beseech thee, with thy Holy Spirit; and ere we give sleep to our eyes, or slumber to our eyelids, may we have the sweet assurance that Thou art enshrined within our hearts as Thy chosen dwelling-place. Thy mercies have been largely vouchsafed to us during the course of his day -- in sparing our lives and bestowing upon us the privilege of Thy true religion. Make us ever to rejoice in the tokens of Thy love and remembrance, being taught and learning thereby Thy goodness towards us. We



would to-night offer to Thee all the praise and all the glory for every good and perfect gift that we enjoy, for Thou art the Author, and Thou the Giver, of them all. We thank Thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for the unspeakable gift of Thy Son. May we accept this Thine inestimable benefit. May we put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and clothe ourselves in His righteousness, as with a garment -- not over, but instead of, our filthy rags. Give to each one in this house and family the spirit to think and do all such things as be rightful. Grant us peace -- peace with God, peace with our fellow-men, peace with our own selves. Renew our tempers and dispositions, and conform us in all things to the likeness of the meek and lowly Jesus. Let our words be kind, remembering the words of Thy holy apostle -- "Be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another; love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous." Bless, we beseech Thee, the children of this house; may they grow, not only in years and in stature, but also, as Thy holy Child Jesus did, in wisdom, and in favour with God and man. We beseech Thee also to bless the servants in this family; may they with us become servants of the Great Master, all of us fellow-servants in His sight. Look mercifully on the sick and the poor; give them Thy comfort in their souls, and raise up friends to render them all needful help for their bodily wants, and the supply of their temporal necessities.

And now that we retire to sleep, we would commend ourselves, and all that we love, to Thy good care; may our slumber be refreshing, may no ill dreams disturb our rest, nor any temptation of our spiritual enemy. Awake us in the morning with new vigour for a new day's work. And now, Great Author of our being, accept the charge of our souls and bodies; keep us safely in thy good protection; and grant us Thy peace all the days of our life. And to Thee, O Father, with the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be all praise and glory now and for ever. *Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

#### *Morning.*

**I will be glad in the Lord.**

Thou shalt rejoice before the Lord thy God in all that thou puttest thine hands unto.

I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High.

Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.

The righteous also shall hold on his way; and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger.

Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God.

Ps. civ. 34.    Deut. xii. 18.    Ps. ix. 2.    Ps. xxxii. 11.

Job xvii. 9.    Luke xii. 34.    Joel ii. 23.

#### *Evening.*

**As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.**

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God,  
and into the patient waiting for Christ.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and  
lament, but the world shall rejoice; and ye shall be  
sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.

And let every one that nameth the name of Christ  
depart from iniquity.

Rev. iii. 19, 22. 2 Thess. iii. 5. John xvi. 20. 2 Tim. ii. 19.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and  
floods upon the dry ground.**

And they thirsted not when he led them through the  
deserts, he caused the water to flow out of the rock for  
them: he clave the rock also, and the waters gushed out.

And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go  
out from Jerusalem.

Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the  
gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to  
drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have  
given thee living water.

The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water,  
that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.

Isa. xlv. 3. Isa. xlviii. 21. Zech. xiv. 8. John iv. 10, 15.

*Evening.*

**And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass, with reeds and rushes.**

In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

(But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

Isa. xxxv. 7.      John vii. 37, 38, 39.

## WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Deliver us from evil: for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.**

Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.

We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

For thou hast delivered my soul from death: wilt not thou deliver my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living?

Matt. vi. 13. Jer. xiii. 23. Heb. x. 10, 14. Ps. lvi. 13.

*Evening.*

**Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.**

Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season (if need be) ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations;

That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.

Heb. xiii. 8. 1 Pet. i. 6, 7, 8, 9.

**THURSDAY.**

*Morning.*

**And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.**

But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

Even when we were dead in sins hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved;)

And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus;

That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Eph. ii. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10.

*Evening.*

**Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence;**

As when the melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil; to make thy name known to thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble at thy presence!

When thou didst terrible things which we looked not for, thou camest down, the mountains flowed down at thy presence.

For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, besides thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.

Isa. lxiv. 1, 2, 3, 4.

## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou. These are a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day.**

But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.

And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also?

Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.

Isa. lxv. 5. Luke vii. 30. John ix. 40, 41.

*Evening.*

**Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin.**



Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.

And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompence unto them.

Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:

For our God is a consuming fire.

Eze. xviii. 30. 1 Cor. x. 21. Rom. xi. 9. Heb. xii. 28, 29.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair.**

Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.

For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.

For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better.

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; he that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.

2 Cor. iv. 8, 9.      2 Tim. iv. 6, 7.      Phil. i. 23.      Rev. ii. 11.

*Evening.*

**And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and for and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.**

And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;

And hast made us unto our God kings and priests and we shall reign on the earth.

Rev. v. 8, 9, 10.

HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

FORTY-SECOND WEEK.

MORNING WORSHIP.

O ALMIGHTY God, who by Thy blessed Son didst call Matthew from the receipt of custom to be an apostle and evangelist, grant us grace to forsake all covetous desires and inordinate love of riches, and to follow the same, Thy Son Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* civ. 31-35.

As Thou did'st rest, O Father,  
O'er Nature's finished birth,  
As Thou didst in thy work rejoice  
And bless the new-born earth;  
So give us now that sabbath-rest  
Which makes thy children free;  
Free for the works of love to man,  
Of thankfulness to Thee.

But in thy worship, Father,  
O lift our souls above,  
By holy word, by prayer and hymn,  
By eucharistic love,  
Till e'en the dull cold waste of earth --  
The earth which Christ hath trod --  
Shall be itself a silent prayer  
To raise us up to God.

So lead us on to heaven,  
Where, in thy presence blest,  
“The wicked cease from troubling, and  
The weary are at rest;”  
Where faith is lost in vision,  
Where love hath no allow,  
And through eternity there flows  
The deepening stream of joy.

#### 1 KINGS XIX. 1-14.

AND Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword. 2. Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the

life of one of them by to-morrow about this time. 3. And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beer-sheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there. 4. But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper-tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers. 5. And as he lay and slept under a juniper-tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. 6. And he looked, and behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head; and he did eat and drink, and laid him down again. 7. And the angel of the Lord came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee. 8. And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God. 9. And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there: and, behold the word of the Lord came to him and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah? 10. And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. 11. And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind

rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks, before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: 12. And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice. 13. And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave: and, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah? 14. And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

## 2 KINGS II. 9-14.

AND it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. 10. And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so. 11. And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot

of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. 12. And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father! the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw them no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces. 13. He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan; 14. And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the Lord God of Elijah? And when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over.

-----

*Prayer.*

O ALMIGHTY and merciful Father, who in Thy tender love towards mankind didst ordain the blessing of Thy sabbath day; grant us grace so to open our hearts to Thy voice, and so to seek Thy face in spirit and in truth, that we may enter into rest indeed, because we rest in Thee. And, as Thou didst hallow this day by the resurrection of Thy dear Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the outpouring of Thy Holy Spirit, grant that we may rise on it with Christ

above the vain and perishing things of this world, and be kindled by the fire of the Holy Ghost to love the eternal things of heaven.

Give us grace, O Lord, that we may not be ensnared by the love of this world; keep us from the lust of the flesh -- all vain desires of pleasure, all indulgence of carnal appetite; keep us from the lust of the eyes -- the longing for the praise of men and the glory that passes away; keep us from the pride of life -- from the lust of power, and from trust in self.

Give us strength, we beseech Thee, especially on this Thy holy day, to cast off all the cares of this world -- all covetous desire of riches, all anxious looking forward to the evil of the morrow, all worldly jealousy and strife and selfishness -- that our souls may be open to Thy grace, and our wills bowed humbly to Thy holy will.

Grant that not even the sweetness of earthly love may strive in our hearts against the love of Thee; and make us ever to remember that he who loveth father or mother more than Thee, is not worthy to be called by Thy holy name.

And, above all, O Lord, give us grace so to use this world, that we may ever look forward to that better world which is to come. Teach us to think of that day of death, when our bodies shall lie down in the dust, and our souls shall be present with Thee; teach us to look onward to that great day when the secrets of all hearts shall be opened



before the Judgment-seat of Christ; teach us ever in spiritual longing and in earnest prayer to press onward still to that blessedness of heaven which cannot fade, and that peace of God which passeth all understanding.

Hear us, O merciful Father, for the sake of Him, through whose cross we are crucified to the world, and by whose rising again we are raised to everlasting life, Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O MERCIFUL God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Resurrection and the Life, in whom whosoever believeth shall live though he die, and whosoever liveth and believeth in Him shall not die eternally; we meekly beseech Thee, O Father, to raise us from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness, that, when we shall depart this life, we may rest in Him, and, at the general resurrection at the last day, may be found acceptable in Thy sight, and receive that blessing which Thy well-beloved Son shall then pronounce to all that love and fear Thee, saying, Come, ye blessed children of my Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world. Grant this, O merciful Father, through Jesus Christ our Mediator and Redeemer. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm lxxii.* 23-26.

LORD, it is not for us to care,  
Whether we die or live;  
To love and serve Thee is our share,  
And this thy grace will give.

If life be long, O make us glad  
The longer to obey:  
If short, no labourer is sad  
To end his toilsome day.

Come, Lord! when grace has made us meet  
Thy blessed face to see;  
For if thy work on earth be sweet  
What must thy glory be?

There shall we end our sad complaints,  
Our weary, sinful days;  
And join with those triumphant saints  
Who sing thy endless praise.

Luke XVI. 14-31.

AND the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him. 15. And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God. 16. The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it. 17. And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail. 18. Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband, committeth adultery. 19. There was a certain rich man, that was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: 20. And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, 21. And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores. 22. And it came to pass, tht the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abrahams's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried, &c.

-----

## SERMON XLII.

“THEY HAVE MOSES AND THE PROPHETS;  
LET THEM HEAR THEM.” -- Luke xvi. 29.

THESE words of our Lord Jesus Christ are taken from the close of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. The parable itself is one of the most terrible which ever fell from his lips -- a parable which, by its awful significance, has impressed itself on the very language of men, and which yet, probably on account of that same awfulness, we are peculiarly apt to evade by narrow and superficial interpretation.

It will be our object now, by God's blessing, to grasp its full meaning; remembering always that, in interpreting our Lord's parables generally, our chief danger lies in this tendency to limit them too narrow a sphere, and to think that we have fathomed their meaning, when we have grasped their first and most obvious lesson. We forget that He, as the “Word, by whom all things were made,” pierced through the whole outward system of life, to the few deep and simple principles which lie at the root of it all. We forget that the very ground on which his teaching by parables is based, is that God's dealings with this life and

with the next, with the things of earth and the things of heaven, are all based on the same deep truth, and guided by the same ultimate law. We forget that the very object of such teaching was, (as He Himself declared) to test the thoughtfulness and spiritual insight of those to whom He spake; and that, accordingly, while each parable has a lesson which “he who runs may read,” yet that the whole truth lies deep, and must be drawn out (so far as it can be drawn out in its fullness at all), only by thoughtful and prayerful study.

Now, applying the general principle to the parable before us, let us first see what the parable is not -- what (that is) are these delusive interpretations, whether false or superficial; and then let us try to see what the parable is in its true central lesson, which belongs to us, as much as to those who heard it from our Lord’s own lips.

First of all, then, the parable is sometimes supposed to be a mere enforcement of our Lord’s declaration as to the danger of riches. It has been thought that the rich “young ruler,” whom He loved, but who afterwards turned away from Him, because he could not give up his wealth, was none other than the Lazarus, whom our Lord is said elsewhere to have loved with a personal affection, and that his name was introduced in the parable, contrary to our Lord’s universal custom, that it might strike suddenly on his ear, and give him a first and startling warning. And many

have inferred that this warning is all -- that the parable merely declares poverty to be a safer, and therefore a happier, state than wealth. How much better, say they, to be the poor Lazarus in all his misery and degradation, which was his way to paradise, than the rich man in his purple and fine linen, with the torments awaiting him on the other side of the grave! Doubtless: but is it exactly the question of poverty or riches which makes the unspeakable difference? Who was that Abraham, who is here the very representative of the blessed? Was he not rich, a man of flocks and herds, of silver and gold -- a man to whom all bowed down as to a great prince, and who went to his grave full of wealth and honour? If he was in paradise, surely the rich man might have found his way thither. And, as a matter of fact and experience, do we not know that each state has its peculiar temptations? and that, if the rich are certainly tempted (as in the case of the young ruler) to idolatry of riches, the poor have their temptations to envy and discontent and dishonesty, which wreck many a soul? No! brethren, it will not do to fancy that all who suffer evil things here (especially if, as so often is the case, they bring half of their sufferings on themselves), will be in paradise hereafter; or that there is any charm in suffering, however it come, whether from God's providence or our own choice, to make us holier and better of itself.

We may put aside any such idea, as not only imperfect but untrue -- as one of the ways in which men will choose to lay stress on the circumstances around them, instead of looking to the spirit, which the Holy Ghost kindles in them.

Then, again, there is a notion of the parable apparently implied in the heading of the English Bible, which speaks of the rich man as the “rich glutton:” I mean the idea that this rich man was a type of a vicious, self-indulgent sensuality, the representative of the gluttons and the drunkards, or of the revellers in mere trifling and folly. The inference is that the parable is designed to tell us how this degradation of humanity will be punished, and its good things (if they deserve the name) swallowed up in an eternal loss. This indeed, is true enough in itself -- a lesson which all common sense and experience teach us, and which every heathen philosophy knew, and yet one to which men will shut their eyes, and to the consciousness of which they need often to be startled by the thought of “the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched.” But again we must say, that this is not the lesson of this parable. The very circumstances tell us this; for it was addressed especially to the Pharisees (verse 14), and great as their sins were, yet unbridled sensuality and mere self-indulgence were not among them, could not have been among them, without putting their pretensions to an open shame. And when we look carefully at the parable itself, we find that there is no



reason to believe that the rich man was a glutton at all. He was “clothed in purple and fine linen,” for this was the mark of his station; and the words translated “faring sumptuously” only mean, in the original, “enjoying himself in splendour.” We know not what his enjoyments were; they may have been sensual, or they may have been those which are respectable or creditable in the eyes of the world, and which, when he was buried in pomp, may have been chronicled to his glory on his tomb. We must look a little further yet for the true lesson of the parable.

Is it, then, that which is so commonly drawn as to have become proverbial, that want of charity to the poor was the rich man’s sin, and that the writing of accusation against him was that a beggar lay unheeded at his gate? That he felt no true and living charity, I doubt not; if he had felt it, it might have been, not his salvation, but the way to lead him to it. But whether he was more than usually harsh to, or neglectful of, Lazarus, we do not know. Lazarus was allowed, after Eastern practice, to lie in his gate; in spite of his loathsome disease he was not driven away, as perhaps he might have been from ours. He “desired to be fed with the crumbs from the rich man’s table,” like the dogs, who were his comforters; and we are not told that his desire was refused. Indeed, the rich man seems to have known him by name, and, by his request to Abraham, must have thought that he had some right to use Lazarus’ service, which he

could hardly have done, if he had treated him with utter cruelty, and allowed him to starve before his eyes. Nor does Abraham's answer imply anything of the kind, but simply speaks of the impossibility of the request, and reminds the rich man how he had deserved his fate. Probably Lazarus received a sort of half-compassionate almsgiving, and the rich man was hardly conscious that he neglected any duty towards him. Granting that we have found one part of his fault, we are yet far from being at the bottom of it; granting that he did not love, we must ask still what was the secret of his unloving temper. The latter part of the parable, which has nothing to do with want of charity, shows that we are not yet come to the whole truth.

Indeed in this, as in all half-truths, there is a danger. Almsgiving, though it be good, is not the one thing needful. In older days men, in life or on their deathbed, thought, by giving goods to the poor, to purchase pardon and blot out a multitude of sins; and though we do not in set terms recognize this obsolete superstition, yet perhaps in its essence we are not clear of it, and the tendency of many in our age is to pardon everything in consideration of liberality and almsgiving, and to think that it, and it alone, marks a man's good or his evil. Such certainly is not the teaching of Scripture. We must then look further still, till we can discern the true lesson of the parable. We have indeed been doing so indirectly by these guesses; for the danger of

giving -- all have their part in the lesson, and will fall into their right places, when the central truth rises above them.

All such superficial interpretations are self-condemned by this, that they omit, or disconnect altogether, the latter part of the parable, in which its main lesson comes out. You remember how, in the wretchedness of the other world, the rich man implored Abraham to send Lazarus to his brethren, lest they also should come into this place of torment. He desired that some messenger from the unseen world, breathing all the terrible and unearthly mystery which surrounds it, should break in upon that fool's paradise of mere tangible and visible things, in which he himself had lived, and in which his brethren were living still. By his very prayer he confessed his sin; he showed where its source lay, in the absorption into things visible -- the pleasures, the prizes, the labours, even the duties and affections, of this life -- without any thought of things unseen, any grasp of spiritual principles, any thought of man's destiny and immortality, any true conception of God. There was, indeed, if one may so say, a certain vulgarity of idea, such as belongs to this lower kind of life, in his conception of the remedy required -- a conception which in our own days seems not to have died away. This is, in fact, clearly rebuked by the stern plainness of Abraham's answer. Mingled with the higher element of family affection and desire for his brethren's safety lay the implied

complaint, that he had not had his warning, that he had been allowed to go on in his folly and sensuous life, till the voice of death declared, "Too late! too late! ye cannot enter now." The plain declaration of the answer is one which, though it applied to him, applies tenfold to ourselves, that there is warning, there is teaching, there is loving entreaty, to call us, to melt us, to startle us, to do for us anything and everything, if only we will hear." "They have Moses and the prophets." If they hear them not, and have no heart to hear them, then a miracle would be a mere wonder, and a rising from the dead a mere fruitless miracle.

Such signs may attract the attention of those who are prepared in heart; they may lead them on, as our Lord's miracles so often did, to a real saving faith, but they cannot give the heart to hear, or kindle life in those who are spiritually dead. So our Lord said then, and his own experience confirmed his words. He did rise from the dead. His rising was the well-spring of faith and hope to his true disciples; but the world went on its way, as though He were in the grave still, or turned aside only to mock the belief and to invent fables to account for it.

Here then, I think, we have at last the true lesson of the parable. It tells us that only by faith in the things unseen -- in the presence of God with us, in our spiritual communion with Him, in the eternity or which this life is but a preparation -- only by a lively constant faith in these

truths, grasped, as alone they can be grasped, in the atonement and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, can man rally live as a spiritual being, and rise above the temptations of this visible life.

I need not tell you how much there is to draw him down to it. I pass by the grosser forms of its influence through the mere appetites and passions, not because they are not full of a deadly power (for your own hearts will tell you what power they have), but because it needs little denunciation and less argument to remind us that, in St. Paul's emphatic language, those who live in them "are dead while they live." The real danger lies in the power of what we call worldliness, of which the rich man is a true specimen -- the danger of living, by an unconscious Sadduceeism, as if this life were our only life, as if its riches and its power, its glory and its beauty, its affections and its work, were all. We do not assert this in set terms, or deny the great truths of the Creed which contradict it; but we are apt quietly to ignore them, putting them aside, perhaps carelessly, perhaps with a show of reverence, but in an case putting them aside, and letting the great stream of our life flow on without them to that end to which such a course must at last come. This is the danger -- how great let experience tell! -- a danger to the able and energetic spirits which sway the world, rather than to the mere idler and

sensualist, who retire, as it were, to glut themselves in a corner.

How is it to be met? Our Lord's answer, given through Abraham in the parable, is full of eternal significance.

First, he says, "They have Moses." There is in the Law the great principle of duty, which comes in to curb appetite and passion, to refuse the world's prizes, to temper even the sweet spells of its affections. It tells us to look to our own nature; that we may see how helpless we are in ourselves, how from the cradle to the grave we rest on others, how impossible, therefore, it is to live for ourselves alone. It bids us look round each society in which we are included, -- our family or our school in early days, our nation, our church, or humanity itself, in mature life. It shows us great works going on, far beyond any individual power -- works of which our conscience bears witness to us, that in them we ought to do something ere we die. And behind this, its chief witness, there is the terrible warning of a retribution, begun here, yet surely not ended here in this state of imperfection, but hovering in gigantic, mysterious form, with its sword, drawn, over the regions of the unseen world.

All this, brethren, is impersonated in Moses, and a great power it is. If once the sense of duty is kindled in us, you know what it can do. The battle against the flesh is half-won: for it is a solemn and an ever-increasing power

which has seized upon us. The work of life grows before us, ever doing, yet never done; and there is a spell on our souls, which will never let us rest in mere enjoyment and worldliness. Never should it be despised; even if it seem to speak in human tones, it is still the voice of God.

But it will never come quite home to those depths of the heart, which no human power or passion can stir, unless it speak plainly and avowedly as the voice of God. It was much for the Jews to have such a Divine Voice in the Law of Moses; we know the indestructible vitality and energy which it gave them, and before which the heathen stood fairly amazed. But we have the voice of one greater than Moses. The Lord Jesus Christ, as He is our Saviour, so is He our King -- a King by the only true claim to kingship, by labouring and suffering for our salvation. His voice comes to us with all the power, not only of abstract law, but of living influence and example. It has its sterner tones -- stern by the very sadness which runs through them -- "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" "Whosoever is ashamed of Me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when He comes in the glory of His Father." "If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out; it is better to enter into life with one eye than having two eyes to be cast into hell." But it has its true and characteristic power in the words of love: -- "If any man will follow Me, let him take up his cross and follow

Me;" "As I have loved you, do ye also love one another;" "I go to prepare a place for you . . . whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. He who hears that voice, and is drawn on by it step by step -- old things falling off from him, new duties growing on him every moment -- he has learnt the first lesson of the life above the world.

But it is only the first lesson. They have not only Moses, says our Lord, but "the Prophets;" not only the Law, but the Spirit. There is in us all (surely we know it!) a spirit kindled by God, which refuses to rest on the mere enjoyments of the flesh, because it feels that we are made for better things -- which cannot content itself with the pleasures and glory, or even with the love and the duty of this world, because it has before it an ideal which it longs for, towards which intellect and conscience and imagination all reach eagerly forth. Nor are duty, law, retribution, quite sufficient to satisfy it: for we know the glory of freedom; we feel that in free loving action and thought lies the true glory of humanity.

There are many voices which speak to the spirit, and call out its latent energies. Witness the self-sacrifice of patriotism and loyalty! Witness the love which makes the sunshine of home, even through the clouds of trouble and shadow of death! Witness the earnest love of truth and right for their own sake, which mostly lies at the root of philanthropy! Again, I say, God forbid that we slight these!



for the voice of God is in them, vague, perhaps, but full, as “the sound of many waters.” You must know their power, at least in its simplest forms, and know how it exalts your whole nature.

But in “the Prophets” you hear the only voice which can quite reach the depths of your spirit -- even the voice of the Spirit of God. In them Jewish faith had the secret of its life and progress. They prepared for the future; and that future, brethren, is yours. The Spirit of God is with you; and He will give you the power, which cherishes, exalts, transfigures the spirit within. How He speaks to you in the word of God read and preached, in the services of the sanctuary, in the holy sacrament of Christ’s love, in the secrets of your own hearts, when you meditate on God’s truth, or when you wrestle in prayer -- of this we cannot speak now, nay, in some sense no man can speak; for we “cannot tell when He cometh and whither He goeth.” But the declaration of the parable is this -- that, unless you do in some way hear and receive the message of the Spirit, you cannot live your life here, or be ready for the eternal hereafter. Our covenant is nothing, if it be not of the Spirit. Law is much, but it speaks only from without; human influence is much, but it is narrow and full of weakness, and it must pass away. The Spirit of God alone can fill the soul within. By the delight in truth, by the intense desire of purity, by the power of love, as He raises our souls up to

Himself, so also He makes them new centres of spiritual influence on earth. If ever we speak to and sway the souls of others (and in the thought there is a thankfulness too deep and too solemn for joy), it is, and it must be, only because He speaks in us. For ourselves, and for others, we can but hear His voice within, and give ourselves up to it, whether in pain or in joy, whether freely and gladly or by the agony which shakes our whole nature: for it calls us to the life above this world -- the life which our Lord Himself lived for us once, and which He lives in us now.

There are two great types of life after all, into which all its forms gradually resolve themselves. There is the life of the rich man. It is a life centred on self, bounded by time; it is a life without God, and, to a great extent, without the love of men -- not denying either, but neglecting both. This is on the one side; and what can it offer? A certain amount of pleasure, or rather absence of pain; a certain amount of wealth or glory in this world; a certain power over men, which the shrewd and determined worldling gains. And this is literally all. Happiness here it cannot give; love it cannot win; rest and peace it knows not of, for they are bought by toil. And of the hereafter who shall speak? When we rise at the Great Day, and we are asked what we have done with God's talents, when conscience itself shall strike us dumb and anticipate the judgment on a wasted life,

who shall dare to speak of the sentence which shall follow?  
God grant us to flee from it in time!

What is on the other side? A life not for ourselves, not immediately for our brethren, but for God and for them in Him. It speaks thus in our souls -- "I am not my own; God made me, and gave me all these blessings beyond all I can desire and deserve. Christ redeemed me by His precious blood that I might live to Him. I have solemnly vowed that I will so live. I know that He has sent me into the world, and that He has given me, or will give me, some work to do in His name. I know that all the history of the world is but a working out of His great purpose of creation and redemption, by a thousand times ten thousand spirits, of which I am but one. I will put myself into His hands. I will labour in my generation to do the good which He has set me to do before I die. Other blessings are as nothing. If they come, I will receive them thankful; if they are denied, may He make me content without them! All that concerns me is to do His will, and then I cannot fail, for it is His work and not mine. What matter disappointment, or poverty, or neglect, or contempt, or loneliness here? He is with me and working in me here, and making me ready for heaven. I will, by God's help, give myself to Him. May He, by any means -- by joy or sorrow, by success or failure -- purge out from me all selfishness, and guide and lead me in his service until the end come!"

Such, brethren, is the other life, and what can it promise? Not absence of trouble and trial; for you follow our Master, and His way is the way of the Cross. No riches, or glory, or popularity here; these are in God's hand to be given, as is best for us, or denied. But it can promise you peace and restfulness -- the peace of knowing that your work and our salvation are in God's hand, and therefore can never fail; and the restfulness -- which comes from the mortification of all vain desires, and the ever growing power to say from the heart, "Thy will be done!" It can promise you the power of doing good -- a power which a selfish man can never have, and which an unselfish spirit never yet sought in vain -- although it be good, which shall never be known till it be uttered in blessings over your grave, or in witness before the throne of judgment. It can promise you, above all, rest in a more loving bosom than that of Abraham -- in His bosom who took you to His arms at baptism, who bears you up now in those arms over the ruggedness of the way, and who shall open them to receive you for ever, when your work is over, and your rest is prepared.

God grant us all to make the true choice, and to cling to it even to the end! Let us pray for ourselves and for others, that this choice may be the great lesson learnt day by day, and acted out in this world, which, now that Christ has died, is the "house of God," and now that the Holy Spirit is given, is the "gate of heaven." -- ALFRED BARRY, D.D.

---

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

HOW THE WICKED WAS CAUGHT IN HIS OWN SNARE.

---

WHEN Mordecai heard of the decree that had been sent out from the king to slay all the Jews in the land, he knew well whose hand had struck the blow. He knew, too, that it was aimed especially at his own life; but he was sadder to think of the danger of his brethren, than of that which threatened himself. He could not enough show his great grief. He rent his clothes, and put ashes on his head, and went into the midst of the town, wailing and crying. He even ventured to come close to the gate of the palace, covered as he was with sackcloth and dust. The law did not allow him to go in through the gate in that garb, but he went quite close to it, till all about the court began to notice his behaviour. The queen herself heard of it, and not knowing the cause of her uncle's sorrow, she sent her servants to him with other clothing, and asked him to lay aside his sackcloth. But he would not receive the garments

sent him, and went on wailing and crying bitterly as before. So the queen called for one of the king's officers, and bade him go to Mordecai, and lay a command on him to tell what was the matter. The officer, who was called Hatach, went out accordingly to Mordecai while he was in the street before the gate of the palace, and told him the queen's command. Thereupon Mordecai gave him the whole sad story -- how Haman had plotted to destroy all the Jews, and had persuaded the king to send out a decree to kill them, and had promised to make good any loss that might follow to the king's revenue. He put into Hatach's hand, to give to the queen, a copy of the proclamation which had been made to this effect in the city, and asked him to pray her to go in to the king, and petition him to save her people.

Hatach took faithfully to Queen Esther her uncle's message. When she heard it, she could not tell at first what to do. There was a law in the court of the king of Persia, that any one going in to the king's presence unasked should be put to death, unless the king should be pleased to hold out the golden sceptre, in token of pardon. Now Esther recollected that she had not been called in to see the king for a whole month; and she was afraid that he was displeased with her, and would be still more angry if she went in to his presence unbidden. She bade Hatach tell Mordecai all this. But he sent back a message to the queen, bidding her put away the thought that if the Jews should be killed she

would escape because she was the king's wife, and urging her not to lose the opportunity of trying to deliver her people. He said that perhaps God had brought her to the throne for just this very time, and that if she did not exert herself, God would no doubt deliver his own in some other way; but she should have blame and disgrace. When Esther heard this message, she no longer hesitated. She sent word to Mordecai to call the Jews together, and hold a fast for three days, and pray to God on her behalf. She said that she and her maidens would also fast, and that after that she would go in and see the king, adding this brave word, "If I perish, I perish;" meaning that she was ready to die if it must be so, in trying to save her people.

The fast was kept, both in the palace and in the city, as Esther wished. When the three days were ended, the queen put on her royal robes, and went in all her beauty and grace into the inner court of the king's house. It was a solemn moment for her. But she had prayed to God, and she went in with a firm step, trusting in him and resigned to his will. The king was sitting on his throne opposite the door. So looking out, he saw Queen Esther standing in the court, and was pleased to see her, and at once held out to her the golden sceptre. The queen went near, and touched it, and knew now that her life was safe. Then the king asked her what she wished to say; and she, very wisely wishing to take a favourable time for telling her sad story, merely

requested the king to honour her with his presence at a banquet she had made ready for him, and to bring Haman with him. So the king sent for Haman, and they went together to the queen's feast. When they were drinking their wine, the king again asked her to name her request, and said, if it should be for half the kingdom, she would have it. But Esther still thought it best to put off for a time, and said that if the king would come with Haman to another banquet next day, she would then tell her petition. The king gave his consent.

Full of joy and pride for the honour the queen had done him, Haman left the palace. You could see by his look how his soul was lifted up in him; but as he came out through the gate, he met a sight that maddened him. There was Mordeai sitting in his place, and he never moved to pay Haman the slightest attention. So he went home full of rage, and called his friends together, and his wife, and began to boast of his favour with the king, and of his grandeur, and riches, and power. He told them how that very day he had been in alone with the king to a banquet prepared by the queen, and that he was invited again for to-morrow along with the king; but then he ground his teeth, and added -- Yet all this is not enough, so long as I see that hateful Jew sitting at the gate. His friends said, Why, get him hanged out of the way. Put up a gibbet to-night for the purpose, and ask the king to-morrow to have him sentenced



to death. So the gallows was erected, but God had designed that another than Moredcai should be hanged on it.

That night the king could not sleep; and tossing about on his couch, he called some of his servants to come and read to him from the book in which the events of his reign had been written down. It happened as they read, that they came on the passage which told how Mordecai had once saved the king's life, by discovering a plot against it. The king said, Has Mordecai been rewarded for this? and his servants said, Nothing has been done to him. The king was quite vexed at this, and hearing that some person had come into the court (for it was now early morning), he called out to know who was in attendance. Now it happened to be Haman, who had come early to ask the king to give orders to hang Mordecai. So he went in when he was called for, and the king said to him, What shall we do to a man that I am very anxious to honour with marks of my royal favor? Haman said to himself, I must be the man; there is none the king would like to honour so much as myself. So he said, Let the man the king wishes to honour be clothed with royal apparel, and let him wear the king's crown, and ride on the king's horse; and let one of the most noble princes of the court lead him through all the city, and proclaim as he goes, This is what the king does to the man he wishes greatly to honour! Go, answered the king, and do as you have said to the man Mordecai, and make haste about it.

Haman had no choice. So he took the robes, and the crown, and the horse, and brought Mordecai through the city, and cried, as he led his horse, This is the way the king honours the man who has greatly pleased him! As soon as the procession was over he hurried home, covering his head for shame and grief; and when his wife heard what he had been forced to do to his enemy, she gave him the cold comfort of saying, If the man be a Jew, you are sure to fall before him. There was little time, however, for talking about it, for messengers came to hurry him to the queen's banquet.

When the feast was proceeding on this second day, the king again asked Esther to name her desire, and if it should be something worth half the kingdom, she should have it. The queen replied, My petition is for my life, and the life of my people: for, said she, we are sold to be destroyed and perish out of the land. If we had merely been sold to be slaves, bondsmen and bondwomen, I would not have said a word; but nothing will satisfy our enemy but our death. Who dares propose such a thing, said the king with his anger evidently rising; where is the man? There he is, said the queen, pointing to her guest; the adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman. At this word the poor wretch quailed and cowered, while the king rose up and walked out into the garden, filled with indignation. In his absence Haman threw himself at the queen's feet, to beg for his life. But

when the king came back into the room, he said a few words that showed the attendants that Haman's doom was sealed. So they covered his face, to show that he was condemned to die. One of the king's officers then told the king that Haman had a gibbet ready for Mordecai, and the king said, Hang Haman himself on it, and it was done at once. So the wicked man was caught in his own snare.

After that Mordecai was brought before the king, to whom Esther had said that he was her uncle, and had brought her up from a child. The king was greatly pleased with him, and put him in Haman's place, and indeed made him next to himself in dignity and power. At the request of the queen, means were taken to put the Jews on their defence against their enemies all through the land, and the days which they looked forward to with dread as days of slaughter, became a time of victory and joy. A feast was yearly kept for long after, called the Feast of Lots, in celebration of this great deliverance. And many happy days had Esther and Mordecai in the court of King Ahasuerus.

-----

1. Where do we find a proclamation and written decree spoken of, giving liberty to the Jewish people?
2. When did a king appear on the wall of a city wearing sackcloth?

3. When did a king and his whole people cover themselves with sackcloth?
4. When was God's gracious design to save lives fulfilled by a young Hebrew being raised to a place next a great king's throne?
5. When did a wicked man make a vain plot against the life of the king of the Jews?
6. When did sentence of death fall on a king's ear at a great banquet of wine?
7. When did sentence of just punishment fall on a king's ear, when he was speaking to himself of his honour and glory?
8. What psalm tells us that the lot of the violent and bloody man will be to be taken in his own snare, and to fall into the ditch he digs for others?
9. Where is a passage of the Old Testament, quoted in the New, teaching in other words the same truth?

ANSWERS to these questions will be found by turning to the following chapters. -- 2 Chron.xxxvi. and Ezra i.; 2 Kings vi.; Jonah iii.; Gen. xli., l.; Matt. ii.; Dan. v.; Dan. iv.; Ps. vii.; Job v. and 1 Cor. iii.

-----

*Prayer.*

O LORD thine eye is on all men's hearts. Thou seest the good and kind thoughts of those who love the right, and Thou seest also the base and cruel thoughts of those who are selfish and evil. Turn to nothing the plans of wicked people against the righteous. Keep thine own dear children safely from the devices of Satan, and such as serve him. We rejoice to think that no real evil can befall them, and that even things which seem to be against them shall be for them. May we be enabled to put our trust in Thee, and to go on doing what is right, fearing no evil. O, protect the helpless, visit the oppressed, prosper the cause of justice and truth in the earth. Let Christ more and more reign over all men, to Thy praise and glory, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

-----

## EVENING WORSHIP.

WE thank Thee, O Merciful Father, for the rest and peace which Thou hast given us this day, for the message of Thy love and the approach to Thy throne of grace. We thank Thee, O Lord Jesus Christ, that Thou hast been present this day in the midst of us, who have been gathered in Thy holy name. We thank Thee, O God the Holy Ghost, that Thou hast enlightened our minds to receive the word of the Lord Jesus, and kindled our hearts to worship in spirit and in truth. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* li. 1-6.

A FEW more years shall roll,  
A few more seasons come;  
And we shall be with those who rest  
Asleep within the tomb.  
Then, O my Lord, prepare  
My soul for that great day;  
O wash me in thy precious blood,  
And take my sins away.

A few more struggles here,  
A few more partings o'er,  
A few more toils, a few more tears,  
And we shall weep no more.  
Then, O my Lord, prepare  
My soul for that blest day;  
O wash me in thy precious blood,  
And take my sins away.

'Tis but a little while  
And He shall come again,  
Who died that we might live, who lives  
That we with Him may reign.  
Then, O my Lord, prepare  
My soul for that glad day;

O wash me in thy precious blood,  
And take my sins away.

JOHN XIV. 1-26.

LET not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. 2. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am there ye may be also. 4. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. 5. Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? 6. Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me. 7. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. 8. Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. 9. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? 10. Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself; but the Father, that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. 11. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the



very works' sake. 12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. 13. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14. If ye ask anything in my name, I will do it. 15. If ye love me, keep my commandments: 16. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever: 17. Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. 18. I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you. 19. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. 20. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. 21. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. 22. Judas saith unto him (not Iscariot), Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? 23. Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. 24. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's that sent me. 25. These things have

I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. 26. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you, &c.

-----

*Prayer.*

WE pray Thee, O Father, who knowest the secrets of our hearts, and yet art not extreme to mark what is done amiss, to pardon all the imperfections of our services, our wandering thoughts, our coldness of heart; grant that our prayers may be accepted through the intercession of Thy dear Son, and the words of Thy truth may be written by the Holy Spirit upon our hearts.

Enable us, we beseech Thee, to hear and receive the law of Thy divine will -- to hear Thy voice in all the calls of earthly work and duty, but above all, to read and learn and inwardly digest the message of Thy holy word, that, in all the changes and chances of this mortal life, we may say from our hearts, "Not my will, but Thine, be done."

Especially, grant us to recognize that holy will in the life and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, to follow His blessed

example in perfect devotion and sacrifice to Thee, to hear His call when He stands at the door and knocks, and to take up our cross and follow Him whithersoever He goes.

Thou knowest, O Lord, that “our spirit is willing, yet our flesh is weak;” Thou knowest that, though we delight in Thy law after the inner man, yet there is a law of the flesh still in us, warring against the law of Christ Jesus. Grant us, therefore, O merciful Father, not only to know Thy will, but to receive the grace of Thy Holy Spirit, and to show forth its fruits -- by the earnest delight in truth, by the beauty of holiness, by the love which is the very bond of perfectness, and without which whosoever liveth is counted dead before Thee. Give us, we beseech Thee, the mind that was in Christ Jesus our Lord; let Thy Holy Spirit work out in us His divine image. Renew our souls day by day, that we may be ready for that time when our vile body shall be made like unto His glorious body, and we shall be one with Him for ever, in the place which He has prepared for us.

Grant us, O Father, so to live, by Thy will and in Thy Holy Spirit, in the work of the week which is to come; grant us, through each succeeding sabbath, to learn better that holy will, and seek more earnestly the gifts of Thy Holy Spirit; that so we may be ready for the eternal rest, which is laid up for the people of God, and seeing Thy Son, our Saviour, as He is, we may be made like Him for ever!

Hear us, O Lord, for Thy mercy is great, and of Thy great mercy look upon us, for the sake of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

#### *Morning.*

**But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:**

In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

2 Cor. iv. 3, 4, 5, 6.

#### *Evening.*

**Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.**

Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.

Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have.

Ready to distribute, willing to communicate;

To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men.

Heb. xiii. 2, 3, 5.      1 Tim. vi. 18.      Tit. iii. 2.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?**

Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.

If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

As free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.

Rom. vi. 16.    John viii. 34, 35, 36.    1 Pet. ii. 16.

*Evening.*

**Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;**

That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as through some strange thing happened unto you:

But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

1 Pet. iv. 1, 2, 12, 13.

## WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.**

Now, I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment.

For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.

But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain.

1 Cor. i. 9, 10, 11.

Tit. iii. 9.

*Evening.*

**Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.**

Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines: for it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace.

For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burnt without the camp.

Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.

Heb. xiii. 7, 9, 11, 12.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**For, behold, I create new heavens, and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.**

But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.



And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people; and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.

There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner, being an hundred years old, shall be accursed.

Isa. lxv. 17, 18, 19, 20.

*Evening.*

**Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her;**

That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may have milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory.

For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees.

As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem.

Isa. lxvi. 10, 11, 12, 13.

**FRIDAY.**

*Morning.*

**O Lord, thou knowest: remember me, and visit me, and revenge me of my persecutors; take me not away in**

**thy long-suffering: know that for thy sake I have suffered rebuke.**

Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts.

I sat not in the assembly of the mockers, nor rejoiced; I sat alone, because of thy hand; for thou hast filled me with indignation.

Wait on the Lord, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land.

Jer. xv. 15, 16, 17.      Ps. xxxvii. 34.

*Evening.*

**And now therefore thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel,**

Behold, I will gather them out of all countries whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely:

And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them.

And I will make an everlasting covenant with them,  
that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I  
will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart  
from me.

Jer. xxxii. 36, 37, 39, 40.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**Thus saith the Lord God, An evil, an only evil,  
behold, is come.**

The morning is come unto thee, O thou that dwellest in  
the land: the time is come, the day of trouble is near, and  
not the sounding again of the mountains.

Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live; and so the  
Lord, the God of hosts, shall be with you, as ye have  
spoken.

Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish  
judgment in the gate: it may be that the Lord God of hosts  
will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph.

Eze. vii. 5, 6, 7. Amos v. 14, 15.

*Evening.*

**Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that  
bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace! O Judah,**

**keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows: for the wicked shall no more pass through thee; he is utterly cut off.**

Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people,  
even for the salvation with thine anointed; thou woundest  
the head out of the house of the wicked, by discovering the  
foundation unto the neck.

Thou didst walk through the sea with thine horses,  
through the heap of great waters.

Nah. i. 15. Hab. iii. 13, 15.

# HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

## FORTY-THIRD WEEK.

### MORNING WORSHIP.

HEAVENLY Father, we welcome the return of Thine own day, the day which the Lord hath made. We will be glad and rejoice in it; and though we assemble not in Thy house, make this the place of Thine abode. It is heaven where Thou art. May we have a foretaste of heaven here. May heavenly manna descend for the nourishment of our souls, and the Holy Spirit help us to gather it and to be strengthened thereby; and thus may we be helped on our way to the rest and service above, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* cxviii. 24-29.

WELCOME, sacred day of rest,  
Sweet repose from worldly care;  
Day above all days the best,  
When our souls for heaven prepare;

Day when our Redeemer rose  
Victor o'er the hosts of hell,  
Thus he vanquished all our foes:  
Let our lips his glories tell.

Gracious Lord, we love this day,  
When we hear thy holy word.  
When we sing thy praise and pray,  
Earth can no such joys afford.

But a better rest remains:  
Heavenly sabbaths, happier days,  
Rest from sin, and rest from pains,  
Endless joys, and endless praise.

## 2. KINGS II. 1-16.

AND it came to pass, when the Lord would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisah from Gilgal. 2. And Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee; for the Lord hath sent me to Beth-el. And Elisha said unto him, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they went down to Beth-el. 3. And the sons of the prophets that were at Beth-el came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Lord will

take away thy master from thy head to-day? And he said, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace. 4. And Elijah said unto him, Elisha, tarry here I pray thee, for the Lord hath sent me to Jericho. And he said, A the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho. 5. And the sons of the prophets that were at Jericho came to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Lord will take away the master from thy head to-day? And he answered, Yea, I know it, hold ye your peace. 6. And Elijah said unto him, Tarry, I pray thee, here; for the Lord hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on, &c.

-----

### *Prayer.*

HEAVENLY Father, we thank Thee for the provision made for our bodily wants. Thou hast a numerous family to provide for yet Thou openest Thine hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing. We bless Thee for the light of this day, and that it brings with it so many spiritual blessings. May it be a day of rest to us -- a rest not only from worldly toil and care, but rest in close communion with Thee. We adore Thee that this day is a monument of

creation, and of redemption also. Thou hast erected it by the empty tomb of Jesus, to remind us that He is risen indeed. May our risen Lord manifest Himself unto us in another way than He does to the world. May He breathe upon us, and say, Receive ye the Holy Ghost. May He talk with us, that our hearts may burn within us. May He come in and tarry with us, that our dwelling may become the house of God and the gate of heaven.

We bless Thee for the abundant proof afforded that Christ hath finished the work given Him to do. We hear Him exclaim from His cross, It is finished. We know it from the empty tomb. We behold in thought the multitude which no man can number before the throne, who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. But especially we bless Thee that we ourselves are living witnesses. Lord, we once were burdened with sin, but we obtained deliverance at the cross. Sprinkled with the atoning blood, we have peace with God. Wilt Thou cleanse us, this day, from all the contracted pollution of the past week? Destroy within us the roots of sin, and may we perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord. And help us, we beseech us, to live as the children of God. As we pass through this world as pilgrims, may our affections not linger among forbidden things, but be steadfastly fixed on things above. May our meetness for heaven be advancing day by day. As Thy children, may we submit to be taught by Thy



Spirit and Thy Providence. Bring us to the Saviour's feet, that learning of Him we may in due time be fit to dwell with Him. We earnestly plead with Thee for those of our kindred who love Thee not. Spirit of God! Convince them of their sinfulness and their need of Christ. Wound their hearts by the arrows of divine truth as well as by the strokes of affliction, that broken in heart they may come to the Great Physician, and be made whole. O that none united to us by the ties of nature may be parted from us hereafter, but as a family may we all meet in our Father's house above. And we desire to thank Thee on behalf of our kindred who have already gone thither, and who wait our coming. We would not ask back any whom Jesus has taken to his bosom. They were His more than they were ours, and the right to gather them was His alone. We will go to them, but they cannot come to us.

Bless, we pray Thee, all Thy people. Begotten of Thee, may they bear much resemblance to their Father, and to Christ their elder brother. Bind them with the cords of love to the cross, that they may be brought closer to one another. May they be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. May Thy church go forth in divine strength to subdue a revolted world to Christ. May all Thy ministering servants be faithful to their Master and to the souls of men, watching for them as those that must give account. Hasten the day when the Redeemer's throne shall be set up in every

heart and His praise sung by every tongue, yea, when all the earth shall be filled with His glory.

Bless our native land in all its interests, religious, civil, and commercial. May peace and plenty, truth and justice, honesty and temperance, abound among us. Bless our beloved queen and all the members of the royal family; may they belong to the family of God, and their names be written in the Lamb's book of life. Remember those who have great public duties to fulfil. May they seek to promote the glory of God and the nation's good. Look down upon our sailors and soldiers and miners, and all exposed to danger whether on land or sea, and may their souls be saved from everlasting death.

And now Heavenly Father, be with us as we further wait upon Thee. May the message to be delivered be mixed with faith in them that hear it; and unto the Father, unto the Son, and unto the Holy Ghost, as unto one God, be all honour and glory, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O GOD, when we are about to read Thine own word, we turn to Thyself, the author of it. Help us to understand it, that it may nourish our souls. May it be brought home to our hearts by Thy Holy Spirit, and prove a word in season, to the edification and comfort of each of us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* lxviii. 7-10.

WHEN on Sinai's mount I see  
God descend in majesty,  
To proclaim his holy law  
All my spirit sinks with awe.

When, in ecstasy divine,  
Tabor's glorious steep I climb,  
At the top, transporting light,  
Darkness rushes on my sight.

When on Calvary I rest,  
God, in flesh made manifest,  
Shines in my Redeemer's face  
Full of beauty, truth, and grace.

Here I would for ever stay,  
Weep and gaze my soul away;  
Thou art heaven on earth to me,  
Lovely, mournful, Calvary.

## MATTHEW XVII. 1-8.

AND after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, 2. And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. 3. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. 4. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. 5. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. 6. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. 7. And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only.

## MARK IX. 2-8.

AND after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them. 3. And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them. 4. And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus. 5. And Peter answered and said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. 6. For he wist not what to say; for they were sore afraid. 7. And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him. 8. And suddenly, when they had looked round about they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves.

-----

## SERMON XLIII.

“AND IT CAME TO PASS ABOUT AN EIGHT DAYS AFTER THESE SAYINGS, HE TOOK PETER, AND JOHN, AND JAMES, AND WENT UP INTO A MOUNTAIN TO PRAY,” &c. -- Luke ix. 28-31.

THE precise locality of our Lord's transfiguration is not given in the sacred writings; tradition, however, has fixed on Mount Tabor, in Galilee, as the scene of this wonderful event. Whether this be the precise locality or not is still open to doubt, but the locality is nothing: it is the event itself that claims our attention, and this seems to be the divine purpose in the life of our Lord upon earth -- to fix our attention on events, and not on localities. Has it never struck you that the exact spots of Christ's birth, baptism, temptation, and death, cannot be ascertained with certainty? The site of Bethlehem is still pointed out to the modern traveller, but there is not a spot on which you can stand and say, “The stable stood here, and here must have been the manger where the babe was laid.” Christ was no doubt baptized in Jordan, but the exact spot is a matter on conjecture. He was tempted in the wilderness, but who can fix the precise locality? He was crucified on Calvary, but even the site of that place is doubtful. No doubt, monuments have been erected on certain spots by human hands, but the very attempt to identify localities has rather

obliterated than preserved them. Now, why is this? Surely the divine hand that has preserved the sacred writings through many centuries, could have preserved the sacred places; but they come not within the scope of supernatural care, and are therefore left to themselves. God's wisdom and forethought are seen in this. We all know the tendency of the mind to the superstitious and the sensuous: hence the Mahometan repairs every year to the shrine of the false prophet; and the Papist is taught to adore pieces of the material cross and manger, and even the thorns and nails that pierced Christ. But the religion of Jesus is a spiritual religion, and the less we have to do with what is material, the better. It appeals, not to our superstition, but to our hearts and consciences; hence its indifference to places connected with the life of our Lord.

Have you not noticed the same divine purpose in the Old Testament? Had the burial place of Moses been known, and the tables of stone been extant, what gross superstition would have been engendered? Moses was the saviour of Israel -- their leader through the sea and the wilderness, their captain in battle, and their lawgiver in peace. If the Jews had known the locality they would, doubtless, have made the pilgrimages to his tomb. How wise in God to remove him quietly from the earth when his work was done! His work survives; that is what we have to do with. But the place of his burial is unknown unto this day.

And thus is it in connection with Christ's transfiguration. As we have said, the precise spot is not known -- that is quite immaterial. But the event itself is recorded, which is the material point that concerns us. It is recorded by three evangelists, almost in the same words, with only those points of difference that show they wrote independently, and did not copy from one another.

Let us then notice two or three points in this remarkable event: --

I. "He went up into a mountain to pray; and as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistering." It is evident this remarkable event was preceded by prayer: it was, in fact, an answer to prayer. Though Jesus was God and man in one person, yet even he could not do without prayer. The most striking events in his life were always preceded by prayer. When he fed the thousands in the desert he prayed; when he was in the garden of Gethsemane he prayed; and when he hung on the cross he prayed. No wonder, then, that he prayed at his transfiguration. The words of the prayer are not recorded: perhaps no words were uttered, for are there not deep feelings in the heart that cannot be put into words? The best and most effectual prayers are offered when alone with God, and when the heart prays without the aid of the lips. Still we may conceive what the burden of Christ's prayer was, from the answer to it. Remember his death



was drawing nigh. What Moses and Elias on the mount spake of, be assured Jesus thought of; and “they spake of the decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.” It was all they could do. Peter, and John, and James might accompany Jesus to the mount, but they could not share his sufferings. He trode the wine-press alone; of his people there were none with him. It was the prospect of suffering -- it was the burden of a world’s guilt pressing upon his soul -- that led him to pray; his humanity shrank from suffering, and therefore he needed strength; he was, even now, bearing the cross and staggering under its awful weight, and he must pray to his Father for support.

Where was his closet for prayer? It was in the mountain solitude; to him this was like a quiet haven by a stormy sea, and there, far removed from the strife of men, the light and glory of heaven came in answer to prayer. And why should the answer to prayer come in this particular form-- “the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening?” In his approaching sufferings “his countenance was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men.” Was not his brow lacerated with thorns and his back with the scourge? Was not even his raiment stripped off him, and lots cast whose it should be? The answer to prayer is thus sent as a foretaste of the glory when all his shame and sufferings were past: “for the joy that was set

before him he endured the cross and despised the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Yes, after the shame and pain of the cross there awaited him the glory and honour of the crown; after the wounding and bruising of the body there would be the glorified body which pain could not touch, and its exaltation to the right hand of God. Was not the answer to prayer, coming thus, sufficient to strengthen him for his approaching trial? And as it has been with the Master, so has it been with his servants who have suffered shame and death for his name. They have had such ravishing views of heavenly glory, that in the midst of floods and flames they have sung hymns of praise, rejoicing they were counted worthy to suffer martyrdom for Christ. Is there not in this a great lesson given to ourselves? We, too, may prove the power of prayer: we, too, can ascend the mount of communion with our Father, and there, far away from the tumult of life, we can pray to him who seeth in secret, and obtain grace to help us in time of need, and --

“Who that knows the worth of prayer  
But wishes to be often there?”

There have we not often been? There we have felt the clouds of sorrow roll away, and we have emerged from the shadows of earth into marvelous light; there we have been

lifted out of ourselves, as it were, into the serene calm and assurance of faith. Our hearts have been burdened with care, but there they have let fall the load. Our countenances have been darkened with grief, but there they have been lighted up with joy. What is all this but a kind of transfiguration passed upon ourselves? and it is in answer to prayer: and the end thereof, in our case, is the same as it was to Christ. We have got strength for present trials and coming sorrows, and have descended from the holy mount with our countenances radiant with heavenly glory. Oh! Let us try to be more in this mount with Jesus; there will be less doubt on our minds, less fear in our hearts, less feebleness in our purposes, less worldliness in our affections. We should have more of heaven in our souls, and less of earth -- more of the better world to which we are going, and less of this we soon must quit; and "men would take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus."

II. Observe, there were three witnesses of the transfiguration -- Peter, John, and James. Why three only, and not the twelve? In the divine plan nothing is superfluous -- no waste of power, no unnecessary expenditure of means. Three witnesses were therefore sufficient, for they had only to attest a fact: in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established." Remember, the fact of Christ's transfiguration was to be kept secret until after he was risen from the dead. Read the

36th verse -- “They told no man of those things which they had seen.” The transfiguration was a secret, and we all know the fewer persons intrusted with a secret the better. The selection of three disciples, and these the chief of them, was therefore in harmony with the end to be accomplished.

And is it not also remarkable, that this event in Christ’s life was foreshadowed by an event in the life of Moses? When Moses was installed as the Jewish lawgiver, he too went up into a mountain, and three witnesses accompanied him -- Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu; thus the type is fulfilled in the antitype; Moses was transfigured on the mount: his countenance was so radiant with the divine glory, that when he descended the people could not look upon him. Jesus was likewise transfigured: “and the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening.” But why should the witnesses be Peter, and John, and James? Marvel not that Jesus had his special favourites, whom he loved and honoured more than the rest. Within the circle of the twelve there was an inner circle, and these three disciples composed it. And just as to our most intimate friends we speak more unreservedly, so Jesus spake more unreservedly to them; he told them more, and revealed his heart more to them than to the others. Nor was the witnessing of his transfiguration the only honour given to them: they were the witnesses of his agony in Gethsemane also. Not only were they permitted to behold

his highest glory on earth, but his lowest abasement likewise; and the results of this close intimacy with Christ may be traced still further in the subsequent career of these three apostles. Their devotedness to Christ stands out more prominently than the rest. Take the writings of Peter, and John, and James out of the New Testament, and (except Paul, who also had a transfiguration) the remainder would be but small. Let us then bear this in mind: because they lived nearer to Jesus than the rest, therefore they were more highly honoured, and is it not so still? If we live not near to Christ we shall not be honoured; we shall feel a chill in our souls which will paralyze all our spiritual movements. Mark a Christian who is cold in his religious duties, heartless in his devotions, feeble in the execution of his purposes; it is unnecessary to ask the cause -- he is not walking with Christ. True, he may continue to follow him, but it is afar off; he may come to the table of the Lord, but he sits at the foot of the table, and is not at the head where Jesus is; his place can never be where John was seated, so near the Master that he could lean on his bosom. "Them that honour me I will honour, but they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed." And so it comes to this: if we would possess the seat of honour we must live nearer to Jesus than we have ever done; and such honour and privilege every Christian may have, for the condition of attaining it is within the reach of all. It is not intellect that is wanted --

not learning -- not knowledge. What evidence have we that Peter, and John, and James had higher natural gifts or culture than the rest of the twelve? But they had more love, and this was the secret of all their honour and usefulness. What wonderful power in love! It is love that will enable you to speak for Christ, to win souls to Christ. The most successful winners of souls have been the most ardent lovers of Jesus. Are any of us occupying the lowest place in Christ's esteem? Why not strive to gain the highest? Why remain at the bottom of the table when you might be at the head? Then climb the mount as these three apostles did. Enter into thy closet and shut to the door, and in closer and more frequent communion with Christ we shall be strong for duty and bold in our testimony for him.

III. Observe, Moses and Elias appeared in glory talking with Jesus. Why should these two servants of God, long since gone, appear on this great occasion? Most died on Mount Nebo fourteen hundred years before; Elias went up in a chariot of fire some six hundred years later, and they both went to heaven. Why did they reappear now? Moses represented the law; Elias represented the prophets: and taking them both together, the whole Old Testament economy was represented by them, and they both appear in conference with Jesus, the sole head and representative of the New Testament economy. Is not this at once an announcement that Moses, and Elias, and Jesus were all in

perfect harmony? Christ came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it; and also to fulfil all that the prophets had spoken. In him the law and the prophets met, even as in his presence Moses and Elias stood. Was that church a perfect church to which these representatives had previously belonged? Perfect in its way it was, even as a scaffolding is perfect in the erection of a permanent building. But when the building is completed, the scaffolding must be removed. The law was only a shadow of good things to come, and not the substance of the things themselves. The law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did. Here, then, Moses opportunely appears on the mount with Jesus, to attest the completion of the law and its perfect harmony with the gospel system: that which was perfect had now come, and that which was imperfect was to be done away. Strange! that the priests and scribes would have nothing to do with Christ. They regarded him as a revolutionist, who sought to disestablish the ancient church of Moses. But, behold, Moses himself appears and approves; and if the acknowledged founder of the Jewish church is satisfied, the priests and scribes are rebuked to silence. But alas! they were blinded, and hence their opposition to Christ. In the same way the appearance of Elias was significant: for while he lived he stood forth as the reformer of the Jewish church; he sought to turn the hearts of the children of Israel to the God whom they had

forsaken. He was what John the Baptist, the herald of Christ was, eight hundred years after; and here he too lays aside his rod of office in the presence of One greater than he, even Jesus of whom he spake. "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

From all this we have a striking proof how little of God's plan, in reference to his church, we can take in. It has all along been a gradual development; and yet not the last, for the heavenly church is to be the last development of all. Things that are still unfinished we are not competent judges of: and our views of Christ's church are often confused and narrow, so that it well becometh us not to be dogmatic in our opinions respecting it. Had the patriarchs lived in the days of Moses, and seen their simple form of religion superseded by a most elaborate one; had they beheld the temple in its architectural splendour, and the priests in their magnificent robes, and all the elaborate ritualism connected with the worship of God -- they would have concluded that true religion had disappeared. Had the Jews who lived in the days of Moses and Elias, lived in Christ's day and of his apostles; had they seen a new system inaugurated and carried on, in which neither temple, nor priests, nor altars, nor sacrifices, were to be found -- they



would have concluded that real religion had died out. What! a religion disconnected with the state and stripped of its outward grandeur -- a religion entirely spiritual! they would surely have opposed it with all their might. And thus the priest and the people in Christ's day did; they tried to put Christianity down by crucifying its Founder, and by persecuting the apostles. Oh! had they but known better, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory, nor treated his servants thus. But the church has outlived all opposition, because Jesus its Founder lives; and all the events that have happened have but helped to extend it in the world. There have various dispensations from God, and there are various religious denominations among men; but there is only one church -- one holy catholic church -- which supersedes, because it has absorbed, the patriarchal and Mosaic churches; and this is the church of the living God -- the one spiritual house built into a habitation of God through the Spirit. It is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets; Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. And as Christ's church hath absorbed these, so the heavenly church shall ultimately absorb this; and they "shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven."

"Apostles, patriarchs, prophets there,  
Around my Saviour stand;  
And soon my friends in Christ below

Will join the glorious band.”

Shall we be among them? Then let us look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. What made glory on the mount in Galilee? the presence of Jesus. This heavenly glory may be experienced on earth, with “Jesus in the midst.” It may be experienced here: to the soul resting on the finished work of Christ, heavenly glory is already begun.

*Amen.*

-- ROBERT BALGARNIE.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

### THE STORY OF RUTH.

AT one time there was a great dearth in the land of Israel. A dearth, you know, is a want of food. We have not, in our days, so many dearths as they had in old times. We can help each other better now than they were able to do long ago; and we can guard against want better. Yet some fearful famines do come even in our times. A quarter of a century ago, when the potato crop failed from a strange disease, there was a great dearth in Ireland, and many persons, little children among them, died. People long spoke of that sad time, as the time of the hunger. Not so far back as that, we heard of famine in India, and children in

this country gathered money to buy rice and other kinds of food, to save the starving. It is a fearful thing when people are well and hungry, and can find nothing to eat. It is a terrible death to die, stricken through for want of the fruits of the field.

I do not quite know what caused the famine in the land of Israel at the time of which I speak. But I suppose there had been no rain for a long time, and things sown and planted in the ground did not grow. The earth grew dry and hot; the very wells became empty, and hunger and thirst together made a very sad state of things. It was at the time when God ruled his people by raising up brave, strong, wise men to help them in distress. But famine is a foe very hard to fight against. I suppose as much was done as could be done to help poor people while the drought lasted; but who could bring water to fill the wells, and refresh the fields? No doubt many died, and the rest had to suffer and wait. Some of the people went off to other countries. That must have been a very hard thing for an Israelite to do in those days. The Jews are scattered everywhere now. But, at present, their land is kept from them and desolate. There is no temple for them in it, nor ark of God. Yet even to this day they yearn over their lost country. In those days the tabernacle and the ark were in Canaan, and to go away from it, to one that knew and loved God, was like going from His presence. Yet some even of

the good had to go, just as God's children still have to suffer like others, that they may be humbled and tried, and blessed in the end.

Among the good Israelites who left their country to go to some other land, where the dearth was not raging, was a man of the name of Elimelech. It was a fine name to wear in a time of distress: for it means My God is king, and it would seem to say, Never mind the famine; God is reigning, and will make all things work for good to those who trust him. This man Elimelech had a wife, who was called Naomi, and two grown sons. He had a farm in the neighbourhood of Bethlehem; but though the very name of the little town means House of bread, there was no bread to be got out of the farm for Elimelech and his family. So they went away east, over the river Jordan, into the land of Moab, and sought a living there among strangers. A singular and beautiful thing grew out of this emigration of theirs.

The famine continued for years in the land of Canaan, and Elimelech and his household lived on in the country of Moab. At first, I suppose, they felt much from home, and longed to get back. But as months and years went past, Moab became less strange to them. Several things helped this. Elimelech, first of all, died shortly after they went there. Then the two sons of Naomi, who was left a widow with them, saw young maidens of the people of Moab that

pleased them, and they asked them in marriage, and had wives whom they loved in the strange country. Then both the young husbands died, and the three widows were left to weep by the three graves of their dead husbands. To two of them Moab was home; and even to Naomi the country where the dust of her wedded lord and two beloved sons was lying, could not help being dear.

Still the widow of Elimelech would not forget Judah, and the farm that was her own in the land of God's promise. So when after ten years had passed she heard that the dearth had ceased, and that there was bread again in the old country, she felt desirous to return, and see the home she had left in the day of want. One day she proposed to her daughters-in-law to leave the place where they were, and set out on a journey to the country of Israel. Now both of them were very fond of their mother-in-law, and they said they were quite ready to go with her, and set out at once. After they had gone some distance, Naomi, wishing, I suppose, to try them, how far they were willing to go through trouble for her sake, or perhaps, beginning to doubt whether she was doing right in taking them away from their own people, said to them, "Go back now, my children, each of you to your mother's house. The Lord be kind to you, for you have been very good and kind to my dead sons, and to me. I hope that each of you will, ere long, be happy and at home in the house of a loving husband. God bless you

both.” But they both said, “No, surely we will go with you; we would like to live with you among your own people, in the land about which you have often told us such wonderful stories.” The widowed Naomi, however, still urged them to go back; she said she could not get them homes such as they had had, and they had better stay and be married in Moab. At last one of them (her name was Orpah) was persuaded to return. But it was a sad and yet sweet thing to see how they parted. They wept and kissed, and wept and kissed again. At length the farewell was over, and Orpah went home. Then Naomi said to the other, “See, your sister is gone back to her people and their gods; go you too.” But Ruth (that was her name) would not hear a word more from her mother-in-law. She said, “Do not ask me again to leave you; nothing but death will part you and me; I will not go back. I have quite made up my mind that, wherever you go, I will go with you. Your people shall be my people, and your God shall be my God. When you come to die, mother, if I live after you, I will live till I die in the same place, and my grave shall be made close by yours. Nothing shall separate us.” When Naomi heard Ruth say that, she said no more. Indeed Ruth was so perfectly in earnest that she had made an oath about it; not lightly or profanely, but solemnly, to show that nothing could change her mind. So the two widows, older and younger, travelled on together.

After a while they came to Bethlehem, which Naomi had left ten years before. Now ten years make a great change on most people. In that space of time, boys and girls grow to be men and women, and persons in their prime get to have grey hairs. But the change is greater when grief, as well as time, has been at work. So when Naomi came back to the town where she had been so well known, all her old friends came round about her wondering. They said, "Such a change! We should not have known you. Can you be Naomi?" "Yes," she said, "but do not call me by my old name. Call me Marah." Naomi means beautiful or pleasant, and Marah means bitter. So she said, "Don't call me Pleasant, call me Bitter, for the Lord has dealt bitterly with me. I had a husband and two sons when I went away, and now I have only this widowed daughter. I was full before, now I am empty." Yet, by and by, she came to feel that her emptiness was preparing for a great fulness. That daughter-in-law was to bring to her great joy, and to be one of the mothers who were honoured to be in the line that at last gave to the world the blessed child Jesus.

## QUESTIONS FROM THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Can you find a passage that speaks of a worse famine than that of bread or water?

2. Where do we read of a famine in the land of Israel when plenty came back in a single day?
3. What land was it that supplied corn to people of other countries, when dearth was trying them all?
4. Can you find texts in which the use of water to make trees grow fast and fair and fruitful is spoken of?
5. What wise man did God raise up to save many lives in dearth?
6. What poor woman, with only enough left for one meal, was wonderfully provided for in a time of famine?
7. Can you find a text where it is foretold what dreadful things would happen for want during a siege of cities in Israel?
8. What husband and wife once left their home in Israel, for fear of a king's rage against a little child dear to them?
9. What psalm shows how dear Judah and Jerusalem were to those who had been obliged for a time to live in another country?
10. Where have we a name given in sorrow, and for the purpose of keeping the sorrow in mind, changed for one expressive of joy?
11. Who was it that, being father of a numerous family, lost them all in a sudden storm?
12. Who was it that thought himself bereaved of two sons, when it was not the fact?



13. Can you find a text in which *daughter-in-law* appears to be a name even dearer than that of daughter?

ANSWERS to the foregoing questions will be found in the following chapters. -- Amos viii.; 2 Kings vii.; Gen. xli.; Isa. xliv. and Ps. i.; Gen. xli. and l.; 1 Kings xvii.; Deut. xxviii.; Matt. ii.; Ps. cxxxvii.; Gen. xxxv.; Job i; Gen. xlii.; Micah vii. and Matt. x.

-----

*Prayer.*

O GOD our Maker and Preserver, we thank thee that from day to day thou hast given us bread to eat, and clothing to wear. We could not live but for Thy kind care. We pray Thee to give us still our daily bread. Make us content with that; and if Thou givest us more, help us to use Thy bounty so as to glorify Thy name. Bless all rich people with kind hearts, that will prompt them to aid the poor. Bless the poor that they may look to Thee, and hope in Thy goodness. If anywhere in the world just now there is dearth, do Thou relieve the wants of the suffering people. Bring the abundance of one place to help the lack that is in another. May the days soon come when every part of the world shall be known to all the rest, and if it need help, shall have it freely. May all men soon be brethren, and know and love

Him who is our Brother in heaven. This we ask for His name's sake. *Amen.*

-----  
EVENING WORSHIP.

HEAVENLY Father, bless to us Thy word. May it be as good seed cast into a soil prepared for its reception. Water it abundantly by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. Prevent the enemy of souls from sowing tares, or in any way rendering the word unprofitable. May there be a rich harvest to Thy glory. During the remaining part of this day may we enjoy much of Thy presence. May the common duties of life be means of grace to us, because performed with a single eye to Thy glory, and thus may our sabbaths upon earth be a foretaste of the rest that remaineth for Thy people. Forgive the sins of our service, and accept us for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm cvii.* 10-15.

JESUS, where'er thy people meet,  
There they behold thy mercy seat;  
Where'er they seek thee thou art found,  
And every place is hallowed ground.

For thou, within no walls confined,

Inhabitest the humble mind;  
Such ever bring thee where they come,  
And going, take thee to their home.

Here may we prove the power of prayer  
To strengthen faith, and sweeten care,  
To teach our faint desires to rise,  
And bring all heaven before our eyes.

Lord, we are few, but thou art near,  
Nor short thine arm, nor deaf thine ear;  
O rend the heavens, come quickly down,  
And make a thousand hearts thine own.

#### LUKE XXII. 14-39.

AND when the hour was come he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. 15. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: 16. For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of heaven. 17. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: 18. For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. 19. And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body, which is given for

you; this do in remembrance of me. 20. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you. 21. But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table. 22. And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined; but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed! 23. And they began to enquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing. 24. And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. 25. And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. 26. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. 27. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth. 28. Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations: 29. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; 30. That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 31. And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: 32. But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. 33. And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death. 34.

And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me. 35. And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing. 36. Then he said unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one, &c.

*Prayer.*

HEAVENLY Father, we draw near unto Thee in the evening of Thine own day. We bless Thee that we can assemble for worship in our own dwelling, none daring to make us afraid. May our prayer come up before Thee as incense, and the lifting up of our hands as the evening sacrifice. We put our songs and petitions into the hands of our great High Priest, through whose merit alone we look for acceptance with Thee. We confess that our best services are sinful, and all our righteousness as filthy rags. Even in the calm of Thine own day we have been worldly in our affections, and grovelling in our desires. Sprinkle us afresh with the blood of Jesus, that our sins may be taken away and our whole nature consecrated to Thy glory. We recall to remembrance the evening, when Jesus came

into the midst of his disciples, and said, Peace be unto you. Lord Jesus, deign to come unto us: make Thyself known as all our salvation and desire. Thy peace is what our souls need, and without which we are like the waves of the sea which cannot rest. As we have been forgiven much, help us to love much; and though the honour is not ours of anointing Thy feet, yet do Thou accept the love and gratitude of our hearts. And may it not be in this day alone that we have Thy presence. Having begun the week with Thee, may it be continued and ended with Thee. May a sense of Thy presence always incite us to duty, and check us when tempted to wander in forbidden paths. Help us to follow Thee fully, and to copy Thine example in everything. Bless us at this time, as forming a part of Thy worshipping people. In diverse places and many tongues they worship, yet in Thy sight they appear as one vast congregation. May our family song blend with that of the great multitude, and to our individual hearts may the answers come. Will it please Thee to bless the preaching of the Gospel this day to all who have heard it? May it prove as manna to the hungry, to strengthen them for the pilgrimage that remains. May it be as a sword in the hearts of the King's enemies, and henceforth may they acknowledge His sceptre. Bless all instruction imparted to the young this day, whether in the Sunday school or around the family altar. May the rising race be found in the ways of righteousness. Write

Thy name in each youthful heart and each name in the Book of Life; and when the fathers shall be no more, may their places in Thy church be filled by their children. We commend unto Thee all absent relatives and friends; may they share in the blessings which we have invoked upon ourselves. We commend ourselves to Thy kind protections during the night. May we lie down and be refreshed with sleep and strengthened thereby for the duties of the coming day. May the close of every day remind us of the end of life; and when life's day is done may we sleep in Jesus, and awake in His presence, and be for ever with Him. And all we ask is in the name of Jesus. *Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

#### *Morning.*

**A glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our sanctuary.**

O Lord, the hope of Israel, all that forsake thee shall be ashamed, and they that depart from me shall be written in the earth, because they have forsaken the Lord, the fountain of living waters.

Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: for thou art my praise.

Be not a terror unto me: thou art my hope in the day of evil.

But do thou for me, O God the Lord, for thy name's sake: because thy mercy is good, deliver thou me.

Jer. xvii. 12, 13, 14, 17. Ps. cix. 21.

#### *Evening.*

**I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence;**

And give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.



Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.

And they shall call them, The holy people.

Isa. lxii. 6, 7, 11, 12.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.**

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred -fold, and shall inherit everlasting life.

They forsook all, and followed him.

Song. ii. 10.    Matt. xvi. 24, 25.    Matt. xix. 29.    Luke v. 11.

*Evening.*

**I remember the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown.**

Thus saith the Lord, What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity, and become vain?

Wherefore I will yet plead with you, saith the Lord, and with your children's children will I plead.

For my people have committed two evils, they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.

Jer. ii. 2, 5, 9, 13.

## **WEDNESDAY.**

*Morning.*

**The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.**

O fear the Lord, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him

Hungry and thirsty, their souls fainted in them.

Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses.

And which of you, with taking thoughts, can add to his stature one cubit?

If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least,  
why take ye thought for the rest?

For all these things do the nations of the world seek  
after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these  
things.

Ps. xxxiv. 7, 9. Ps. cvii 5, 6. Luke xii. 15, 26, 30.

*Evening.*

**Let them exalt him also in the congregation of the  
people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders.**

He turneth rivers into a wilderness, and the  
watersprings into dry ground;

A fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of  
them that dwell therein.

He turneth the wilderness into a standing water, and  
dry ground into water-springs.

And there he maketh the hungry to dwell, that they  
may prepare a city for habitation;

And sow the fields, and plant vineyards, which may  
yield fruits of increase.

He blesseth them also, so that they are multiplied  
greatly, and suffereth not their cattle to decrease.

Ps. cvii. 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes.**

Lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein;

Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God,

And thou say in thine heart, My power, and the might of mine hand, hath gotten me this wealth.

But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth.

Deut. viii. 11, 12, 14, 17, 18.

*Evening.*

**Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.**

Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten.

Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire.

For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

James v. 1, 2, 3. 1 John ii. 16, 17.

## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**The righteous considereth the cause of the poor: but the wicked regardeth not to know it.**

Is this not the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?

Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee: the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward.

Prov. xxix. 7. Isa. lviii. 6, 7, 8.

*Evening.*

**Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth; and let not  
thine heart be glad when he stumbleth;**

**Lest the Lord see it, and it displease him, and he turn  
away his wrath from him.**

Fret not thyself because of evil men, neither be thou  
envious at the wicked.

If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat: and if  
he be thirsty, give him water to drink:

For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the  
Lord shall reward thee.

But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life,  
purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience.

Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall  
suffer persecution.

Prov. xxiv. 17, 18, 19.      Prov. xxv. 21, 22.      2 Tim. iii. 10, 12.

## **SATURDAY.**

*Morning.*

**When thou passest through the waters, I will be with  
thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee:  
when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be  
burnt; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.**

For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy  
Saviour.

Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee.

Isa. xliii. 2, 3, 4.

*Evening.*

**The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.**

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat.

Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness.

2 Pet. iii. 9, 10, 11.

# HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

## FORTY-FOURTH WEEK.

### MORNING WORSHIP.

BLESSED Lord, whose only Son our Saviour Jesus Christ hath once suffered for our sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to Thee our God; we beseech Thee, that as we are baptized into His death, so by continually mortifying our corrupt affections we may be buried with Him, at at last, through the grave and gate of death, pass to our joyful resurrection, for His merits, who died and was buried, and rose again, Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

*Amen.*

### HYMN, *or Psalm* cxix. 33-40.

LORD, of mercy and of might,  
Of mankind the life and light,  
Maker, Teacher, Infinite;  
Jesus, hear and save!

Strong Creator, Saviour mild,  
Humbled to a mortal child,



Captive, beaten, bound, reviled;  
Jesus hear and save!

Throned above celestial things,  
Borne aloft on angels' wings,  
Lord of lords, and King of kings;  
Jesus, hear and save!

Soon to come to earth again,  
Judge of angels and of men;  
Hear us now, and hear us then,  
Jesus, hear and save!

## 2. CHRONICLES XVII. 3-13.

AND the Lord was with Jeshoshaphat, because he walked in the first ways of his father David, and sought not unto Baalim; 4. But sought to the Lord God of his father, and walked in his commandments, and not after the doings of Israel. 5. Therefore the Lord established the kingdom in his hand; and all Judah brought to Jehoshaphat presents; and he had riches and honour in abundance. 6. And his heart was lifted up in the ways of the Lord: moreover, he took away the high places and groves out of Judah. 7. Also in the third year of his reign he sent to his princes, even to Ben-hail, and to Obadiah, and to Zechariah, and to

Nethaneel, and to Michaiah, to teach in the cities of Judah. 8. And with them he sent Levites, even Shemaiah, and Nethaniah, and Zebadiah, and Asahel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehonathan, and Adonijah, and Tobijah, and Tob-adonijah, Levites; and with them Elishama and Jehoram, priests. 9. And they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the Lord with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people. 10. And the fear of the Lord fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah, so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat. 11. Also some of the Philistines brought Jehoshaphat presents, and tribute-silver; and the Arabians brought him flocks, seven thousand and seven hundred rams, and seven thousand and seven hundred he-goats. 12. And Jehoshaphat waxed great exceedingly; and he built in Judah castles, and cities of store. 13. And he had much business in the cities of Judah: and the men of war, mighty men of valour, were in Jerusalem.

## 2 Chronicles XVIII.

NOW Jehoshaphat had riches and honour in abundance, and joined affinity with Ahab. 2. And after certain years he went down to Ahab to Samaria: and Ahab killed sheep and

oxen for him in abundance, and for the people that he had with him, and persuaded him to go up with him to Ramoth-gilead, &c.

-----

*Prayer.*

HOLY, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, the triune Jehovah, we worship Thee, O Father, through the only mediator Jesus Christ, and in humble dependence upon the Holy Spirit the Comforter. We thank Thee, O God, for the unspeakable gift of Thine only begotten Son to be our Saviour, and would also bless Thee with fullness of gratitude for sending the Holy Spirit of promise to be our Sanctifier. Establish, we beseech Thee, our hearts in the belief of the personality and divinity of the Holy Ghost, and of the necessity of His gracious influence to dispose and enable us to accept the offers of a free salvation, through faith in Christ. May He impart to us a spiritual understanding, that by His unction we may know all things pertaining to everlasting life. Convince us of sin, and reveal to us its exceeding sinfulness, that we may be tremblingly solicitous for both pardon and holiness. Wash us from the pollution of our fallen and corrupt nature in the laver of

regeneration, and carry on the good work in us. May the Spirit of holiness so govern and purify every power and faculty of soul and body, that they may be reduced to the beauteous order which in our creation Thou didst intend, and by our redemption Thou dost restore. Make our bodies His temple, and may we consider ourselves sacred to God by His indwelling presence; and grant that we may be so filled by his benign power, as to be habitually led by Him in all the ways of righteousness and truth. Help us to acquire that familiar acquaintance with His operations, which shall enable us, at all times of His gracious visitation, to yield ourselves up to His impulses and to follow implicitly His guidance. May He aid us as a Spirit of power in difficult and self-denying duties, as a Spirit of consolation in seasons of affliction, and as a Spirit of love to the whole family of God, and to all the dwellers upon the earth. Suffer us not, O God, if we are Thy children to walk in doubt and darkness, but may we have the witness of the Spirit bearing testimony to our adoption. In thy great mercy suffer us not to quench the spirit by opposing or neglecting His motions, nor grieve Him by the indulgence of unchristian tempers or unholy affections. Through His omnipotent grace may we overcome temptation, go on conquering and to conquer, adding action to feeling, habit to action, and all maintained till they be consummated in a blessed and holy

perseverance, and a meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light.

And while we thus pray for ourselves, we beseech Thee, O God of all power and grace, to pour out Thy Spirit upon the holy catholic church, to purify it from all corruption in doctrine and practice, to remove whatever obstructs its union or disturbs its harmony, and to unite it more closely in the bonds of holy love.

In Thy great mercy to our apostate world, still lying in wickedness, we beseech thee to let Thy Spirit, which moved upon the face of the waters in the beginning, brood over the moral chaos; and by the conversion of all nations to Christ, bring forth to the glory of God our Saviour, the order, the beauty, and the happiness of the new creation.

Grant, O most merciful God, that thus our belief in the Holy Ghost may be followed by all the appropriate fruits of a true faith, to thy glory, through our Lord Jesus Christ: to whom, with Thyself and the ever-blessed Spirit, three persons in one Godhead, be ascribed, through all worlds, glory and honour everlasting. *Amen.*

-----

## CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O MERCIFUL God, who hast made all men, and willest not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live, have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics; make known Thy blessed gospel unto them; take from them all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of Thy word; work lively faith in them; and so bring them home, blessed Lord, to thy flock, that they may be saved among the remnant of the true Israelites, and be made one fold under one Shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

## HYMN.

IN one harmonious, cheerful song,  
Ye happy saints, combine;  
Loud let it sound from every tongue,  
The Saviour is divine.

The least, the feeblest of the sheep,  
To him the Father gave;  
Kind is his heart the charge to keep,  
And strong his arm to save.

In Christ th' Almighty Father dwells,  
And Christ and He are one;  
The rebel power which Christ assails,  
Attacks th' eternal throne.

The hand which heaven and earth sustains,  
And bars the gates of hell,  
And rivets Satan down in chains,  
Shall guard his chosen well.

Now let th' infernal lion roar,  
How vain his threats appear!  
When he can match Jehovah's power,  
Then I'll begin to fear.

### PSALM XXIII.

THE Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. 2. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. 3. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. 4. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. 5. Thou preparest a table before me in the

presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. 6. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

#### EZEKIAL XXXIV. 11-16.

FOR thus saith the LORD GOD, Behold I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. 12. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the dark and cloudy day. 13. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. 14. I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. 15. I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the LORD GOD. 16. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was



sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment.

## JOHN X. 7-30.

THEN said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. 8. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. 9. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. 10. The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. 11. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. 12. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth; and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. 13. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. 14. I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. 15. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. 16. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd. 17.

Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. 18. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father. 19. There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings. 20. And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him? 21. Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil: can a devil open the eyes of the blind? 22. And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter. 23. And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch. 24. Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. 25. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me: 26. But ye believe not; because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. 27. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28. And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. 29. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. 30. I and my Father are one.

-----

## SERMON XLIV.

“ HE SHALL FEED HIS FLOCK LIKE A SHEPHERD.”

-- Isaiah xl. 11.

OUR Lord Jesus is very frequently described as the shepherd of his people. The figure is inexhaustible; but it has been so often handled that I suppose it would be difficult to say anything fresh upon it. We all know, and are very glad and comforted in the knowledge, that the Lord Jesus Christ, as our shepherd, exercises towards us all the kind and necessary offices which a shepherd performs towards his sheep. With gentle sway he *rules* us for our own good: “Let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our maker; for he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.” He *guides* us: “And when he putteth forth his own sheep he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.” He *provides* for us: “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.” He *protects* us from all forms of evil; therefore, “though we walk

through the valley of the shadow of death, we will fear no evil, for he is with us: his rod and his staff, they comfort us.” If we wander, he *seeks* us out and brings us back. “He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.” If we be broken, he binds us up; if we be wounded, he heals us according to his own word, “I will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick.” The sheep is an animal of many diseases and of many wants, and so the Christian is an individual of many sins and many infirmities; but as the shepherd endeavours to meet all the wants of his flock, so our Lord Jesus succours all the blood bought company in all their needs.

We propose to illustrate the great doctrine of the text in a scriptural, and therefore, we hope, in an interesting manner. First, we shall consider in connection with the text, Old Testament illustrations; in the second place, New Testament descriptions; and, in the third place, Impressive applications.

1. We commence with *Old Testament illustrations* of the manner in which the Lord Jesus discharges the office of feeding his flock like a shepherd.

Out of five great types we begin with Abel, the *shepherd slain*. The second man who was born into the world was a shepherd, and was in many respects typical of our good shepherd. Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain

was a tiller of the ground.: Abel was a type of the Saviour in that, being a shepherd, *he sanctified his work to the glory of God, and he offered sacrifice of blood upon the altar of the Lord*, and the Lord had respect unto Abel and his offering. This early type of our Lord is not very full and comprehensive, but it is exceedingly clear and distinct. Like the first streak of light which tinges the east at the sunrise, it does not reveal everything, but it clearly manifests the great fact that the sun is coming, Abel is nothing like so complete, and perfect a portrait of our own Lord Jesus, as other shepherds of whom we have to speak; but as we see him standing a shepherd and yet a sacrificing priest, offering upon the altar a sacrifice of sweet smell unto God, we discern there at once the picture of our Lord, who brings before his Father a sacrifice of sweet smell unto God, we discern there at once the picture of our Lord, who brings before his Father a sacrifice of precious blood, to which Jehovah ever hath respect. Abel, the sacrificing shepherd, was hated by his brother -- hated without a cause; and even so was the Saviour: the spirit of this world, the natural and carnal man, hated the better man, the accepted man in whom the Spirit of grace was found, and rested not until his blood had been shed. Abel fell, and sprinkled his own altar and his sacrifice with his own blood; and he must be blind indeed who cannot behold the Lord Jesus slain by the enmity of man while serving as a priest before the Lord.

Abel is the type of Jesus the slain shepherd; let us attentively consider him. We read in the 10th chapter of John that the good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep -- let us weep over him as we view him stretched upon the ground by the hatred of mankind at the foot of his own altar of sacrifice, pouring out his blood. We read of *Abel's blood*, in the New Testament, that it *speaketh*. "He being dead yet speaketh." "The Lord said unto Cain, The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. Herein we have a blessed type of the Lord: his blood had a mighty tongue, and the import of its prevailing cry is not vengeance but mercy: --

"The rich blood of Jesus slain  
Speaks peace as loud from every vein."

It is precious beyond all preciousness to stand at Jesus Christ's altar, and to see him himself offered there as a whole burnt-offering acceptable unto God; to see him lying bleeding there as the slaughtered priest, and then to hear the voice of his blood speaking peace in our consciences, peace in the church of God, peace between Jew and Gentile, peace between man and his offended Maker -- speaking peace all down the ages of eternity for blood-washed man. Abel is first in order of time, and Jesus first in order of excellence. The earth opened her mouth to receive Abel's blood, and Jesus' sacrifice has blessed this poor, sin-ruined

world. Abel received divine witness to his righteousness, and Jesus obtained the same in the day of his resurrection; but fulness of other matter forbids us to linger.

Further down the page of sacred history we find another shepherd. He is a more instructive type of the Saviour, perhaps, than the first but in Abel we discover a truth which is absent in all others. Abel is the only one of the typical shepherds who dies at the foot of the altar, he is the only sacrificing shepherd; and herein you see Jesus Christ in the very earliest ages set forth to mankind as the slaughtered victim; that whatever else the early saints might not see, yet they might know that the seed of the woman would shed his precious blood. This most vital truth is withheld even for a little season.

Now we turn to *Jacob, the toiling shepherd*. He is a type of the good Shepherd, not as dying, but as keeping sheep with a view to get unto himself a spouse and a flock. Jacob left his father's house. He departed from all the joy and comfort of the house in which he was the recognized heir, both by his own purchase and his father's promise. Our Lord Jesus Christ, out of the love which he bore us, left his Father's house above, and came down to tabernacle among men. Jacob repaired to his mother's brethren; and even so our Lord, on the mother's side, counts men his brethren. "He came unto his own." That vision which Jacob saw the first night after he had left his father's house,

seems to me to be a representation of the great object which our Lord had set before him as the intent of his mission here below. Jacob slept, and dreamed that he saw a ladder the foot whereof stood upon the earth, while the top reached to the heaven of heavens, whence a covenant God spoke to his chosen servant; and so, before the Saviour's eye, as the great reward of all his life's travail, he saw a ladder set up by which earth should be connected with heaven. He saw fallen man at the foot of it, but he beheld a covenant God at the top, while the angels of God ascended and descended upon his own person, as upon the divine road of communication by which prayer mounts and mercy descends. As soon as Jacob arrived at the house of his mother's brethren he began to work, out of the love he bore to Rachel; and Jesus Christ no sooner descended upon this lower earth, than he began at once to labour to win his spouse. Now, there were in the house of manhood two daughters, to both of whom Jesus must be affianced. There was first of all the Jewish church, which as in his eyes his Rachel, his dearly beloved, and he toiled for her; but in the days of his flesh his own received him not. Though while he was here below, he declared that he was not sent to save the lost sheep of the house of Israel, yet Israel was not gathered; yet Jesus lost not his reward, for the Gentile church, the tender-eyed Leah, was his reward. "Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of



the Lord, and my God shall be my strength. And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.” Leah, the Gentile, is far more fruitful unto Christ in spiritual children than the Rachel for whom he served in the days of his flesh; but the day cometh when Rachel shall be more fully increased, when the fulness of the Gentiles having been gathered in, the Jew shall recognize Messiah, and the Jewish people shall own their King. We understand from Jacob’s own description of his toil, that his labour in order to get to himself his spouse was of the most arduous character; and it will be well for the intelligent Christian to see Jesus Christ in just such toil, seeking to redeem unto himself his own beloved, that they might for ever be one with himself in his own glory. In the 31st chapter of Genesis, at the 38th verse, Jacob, while expostulating with Laban, thus describes his own toil: “this twenty years have I been with thee; thy ewes and thy she-goats and thy she-goats have not cast their young, and the rams of thy flock have I not eaten. That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee: I bare the loss of it; of my hand didst thou require it, whether stolen by day, or stolen by night. Thus I was; in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes. Thus

have I been twenty years in thy house; I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattle; and thou hast changed my wages ten times.” Even more toilsome than this was the life of our Saviour here below. He watched over all his sheep till he could give in as his last account, “Of all those whom thou hast given me I have lost none, but the son of perdition, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.” His hair was wet with dew, and his locks with the drops of the night. Sleep departed from his eyes, for all night he was in prayer wrestling with God. One night it is Peter who must be pleaded for; another time, another claims his tearful intercession. No shepherd sitting beneath the cold skies, looking up to the stars, could ever utter such complaints because of the hardness of his toil as Jesus Christ might have brought if he had chosen to do so, because of the sternness of his service in order to gather unto himself his people: --

“Cold mountains and the midnight air  
Witnessed the fervour of his prayer;  
The desert his temptation knew,  
His conflict and his victory too.”

It is sweet to dwell upon the spiritual parallel of Laban having required all the sheep at Jacob’s hand. If they were torn of beasts he must make it good; if any of them died, he must stand as surety for the whole. And did not the

Saviour stand just so while he was here below? Was not his toil for his church just the toil of one who felt that he was under suretyship obligations to bring every one of them safe to the hand of him who had committed them to his charge! Look upon toiling Jacob and you see a representation of him of whom the text says, “He shall feed his flock like a shepherd.” One other point of resemblance there is here, namely, that when Jacob had thus purchased to himself his spouse, and had received a reward for all his toil out of the flock which he himself tended, he then conducted both his family and his flock away from Laban. This is a point never to be forgotten. Shouldering his cross, Jesus went without the camp, and in so doing he speaks to each of us. “Let us therefore go forth without the camp, bearing his reproach.” He went to his mother’s brethren that he might fetch out his chosen from among men, and his voice to his spouse is, “Hearken, O daughter and consider: forget also thine own people, and thy father’s house. So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him.” Jacob coming back from Laban to the promised land, is a true picture of Jesus Christ coming up from the world, followed by his church, to enter upon the better Canaan which has been given to us by a covenant of salt for ever. The toiling shepherd has never ceased his work till he has bidden farewell to Laban once for all, and has come to dwell in tents where Abraham and Isaac had

dwelt before him; and Christ's work is not accomplished in us till he made us like himself, holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. Although these types are very full, I choose rather to give them to you as suggestions to think out for yourselves, than to enlarge upon them myself.

*Joseph* is a type of Jesus, *reigning in the Egypt of this world for the good of his own people, while they are here below*. Remember Joseph's history. We find that he kept his father's flock with his brethren. So did our Saviour when he began to teach and to preach. In the midst of the envious Scribes and Pharisees he kept his Father's flock. They could not, however, brook him in whom they discerned a royalty not in themselves. As Joseph wore a coat of many colours, indicative of princely rank and of his father's love, even so Jesus Christ in the perfections of his nature, being something more than ordinary man, was soon spied out by envious shepherds as anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows. Then began they to find fault with his words. Joseph had seen a dream, in which the sun, and the moon, and the eleven stars made obeisance unto him. And as the envious Scribes and Pharisees listened to the word of the Saviour, and heard him claim that he was the Son of God, and that he came down from heaven, they thought that he dreamed; they charged him with blasphemy, and straightway their hearts were set against him, and they were determined upon his destruction. They sold him for

thirty pieces of silver, the price of a slave. So our Joseph was sold into Egypt to the powers of evil. There he was falsely accused, though in him was no sin. Our Joseph, our blessed Shepherd, was cast into the prison of the grave, and there he abode for a while, but by and by he came out of prison, and Joseph, -- Jesus -- it matters not which word I use, Joseph was made ruler over all the land of Egypt. That same shepherd of ours who was sold by his envious brethren, and who went down into the prison-tomb, is now exalted high above all principalities and powers, and every name that is named; and even here, in this Egypt, where his people now dwell, Jesus Christ is king. Not a dog dare move his tongue in all the land of Egypt without the permission of Joseph, and surely no enemy can forge a weapon against Christ's church here on earth: --

“He overrules all mortal things,  
And manages our mean affairs.”

The Father hath committed all power unto his Son. Jesus Christ is king over Egypt's realm. Now observe the likeness between Joseph and Jesus in this respect. Joseph was of very singular advantage to the Egyptians. They must have starved in the years of famine, if his prescient eye had not foreseen the famine, and stored up the plenty of the seven previous years. And Jesus Christ is of great

service even to this wicked world. It is by him that it is preserved. The barren fig tree was spared because the husbandman pleaded for it, and the intercession of Jesus Christ spares the lives of the unregenerate; and though they will be swept away with the besom of destruction when their iniquity is fully ripe, yet meanwhile they are spared because of the mediatorial sovereignty of the great shepherd. Jesus Christ, like Joseph, rules over the land of Egypt; but Joseph ruled for a special purpose. God had sent Joseph to Egypt, but not mainly for the sake of the Egyptians. “God hath sent me hither to save your souls alive;” this was Joseph’s own testimony. Jesus Christ now hath power over all flesh. Why? “That he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.” The universal reign of Christ, in which respect his redemption comes to all the sons of men, has for its object that special redemption, in which respect it comes only to his own people, who are his sheep. Perhaps some of you may wonder how I venture to call Joseph a shepherd. You grant me that in his early days he kept his father’s flock, but was he a shepherd while he was in Egypt? You will believe the dying words of his father Jacob, will you not? His father Jacob, when speaking of him said, “Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall; the archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him: but his bow abode in strength, and

the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob;" -- then there comes a sentence between brackets -- "from thence is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel." Joseph is here called the Shepherd and the Stone. I could not make out in meditation why he should be both a shepherd and a stone, but you remember that Jesus Christ was at once the shepherd and the stone which the builders refused, which afterwards became the headstone of the corner; and so Joseph in being a shepherd of his people, and in having been the corner stone of the Israelitish race while they were in Egypt, was both the Shepherd and the Stone of Israel. Beloved, it seems to me to be such a delightful thought to think that Jesus Christ is King to-day in the world. The Lord reigneth: let the earth rejoice. Jesus Christ wears the crown this day of universal monarchy. "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand until thine enemies are made they footstool;" so that nothing happens now but that which Jesus permits, ordains, and overrules. Let empires go to wreck, it is Christ who breaks them with a rod of iron, and shivers them like potters' vessels: let conflagrations burn down cities, and let diseases devastate nations, let war succeed to war, and pestilence to famine, yet still our Joseph rules all things well, and we know that all things work together for good according to them that love God, that are the called according to his purpose. The saints are in the world, but

Christ reigns over the world for his church, that it may be kept and preserved in the midst of an evil generation. You remember that remarkable saying, “Now every shepherd is an abomination to the world, and yet it is in this world that at the present time we dwell in so much temporal comfort, under such excellent government, with so little disturbance. To what can we attribute it but to this, that Jesus sits upon the throne and rules Egypt for the good of Israel, and the world is made subservient to the blessedness of the church of God. I must not tarry any longer, though it is a very tempting theme, but I want to take you on to the next shepherd.

Jesus Christ will be represented to you in quite a different character under the next illustration. Moses was not a ruler in Egypt, but quite a distinct character. Moses, when he kept sheep, kept them in the wilderness, far away from all other flocks; and when he became a shepherd over God’s people Israel, his business was not to preserve them in Egypt, but to conduct them out of it. Here, then, is a representation of Jesus Christ as *the shepherd of a separated people*, called from among men, and made to be a distinguished nation, not numbered among the people. Jesus, like Moses, might have been a king. The devil said to him, “All these things will I give thee if thou wilt fall down and worship me.” The people would have taken him, we read, and made him a king, for he was naturally of royal



race; but he refused. As Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, so Jesus Christ said, "Get thee behind me, Satan," to all the pomp and glory of this present world, and preferred to take part with his poor, despised people, who were crushed down by the reigning powers in the Egypt of his days. Now, Moses began his mission, you remember, by going to Pharaoh and saying, "Thus saith the Lord, Let my people go, that they may serve me." Jesus Christ begins as the shepherd of the separate ones by demanding that they should be let go from the bondage of their natural estate. With a high hand and with an outstretched arm, he fetches out his people from among men: plagues and marvels does he work, but he brings them all out. "Not a hoof shall be left behind;" not one child of God, not one sheep of his pasture, left in the Egypt of sin and death. They shall all be made to go without the camp -- leaving even Goshen to go into a wilderness because they must be alone with God, and they cannot worship him in a land full of idols. I might dwell for a long time on all the transactions of Moses in Egypt, and especially upon the paschal supper, all of which was doubtless typical of him of whom the text says, "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd." Our main point is the great exodus of Moses, who at the head of all the tribes goes forth to Succoth. There they pitch their tents. By and by they advance to Pi-hahiroth with the Red Sea before them. With Moses'

staff to lead the van they pass through the sea dry-shod, and come absolutely into the wilderness of separation, as every heir of heaven is brought right out of Egypt, led through the Red Sea of Jesus Christ's blood, baptized into Jesus, and brought out into the separated position in the wilderness. Now, it is easy to see how Moses was a shepherd to the people while in the wilderness. He led them in all their wanderings. He was king in Jeshurun over the people whom God had given to him. When they wanted food his prayer brought down the manna or the quails; when they needed drink it was his voice that made the rock burst forth with floods, or his rod that smote, and lo, the flinty rock gushed with torrents. If there were Amalekites to fight, the uplifted arm of Moses did more than the sharp sword of Joshua. They sometimes received chastisement from him. He ground the golden calf to pieces, and strewed the powder on water and made them drink. They were equally dependent upon him for comfort too; his speech distilled as the dew and dropped as the rain, the small rain, upon the tender herb. Moses, like a shepherd, had to carry all the people in his bosom, as God's appointed messenger, and often did he find it a very weary load, so that he said, "I cannot bear the burden of this great people alone." You have here a suggestive type of Jesus Christ, the leader of the separated church. Brethren, I think we may all of us not only catch the idea, but live it out; the church is in the

desert now. We have left the world, we have left its maxims, its customs, its religion. We hate the world's religion, as much as we do its irreligion. We have forsaken it for good, never to go back again; and though the flesh sometimes falls a lusting and would fain go back to the old bondage, yet, under the guidance of our greater Shepherd, who leads his people far away from Mizraim's polluted shore, we march onward by devious ways to the promised rest.

The last type I mean to give you is *David*. This shepherd represents Jesus Christ, not at all as the others, but *as king in the midst of his church*. David, like Jesus Christ, begins his life with trials. He is anointed and straightway he begins to suffer. The world's king recognizes him, fixes his eyes upon him, hurls the javelin at him, hunts him like a partridge on the mountains, and rests not till he himself is slain. Poor David is the apt picture of Jesus Christ in the days of his flesh, hunted by the world's king, who would fain put him down and crush out his spark. David at length mounts to his throne, quietly and in peace he sits in Jerusalem as king over Israel and Judah; and even at this day, though the kings of the earth set themselves against him, and their rulers take counsel together, this is the decree concerning our Lord, "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." That same shepherd who of old snatched the lamb out of the jaw of the lion and delivered

his sheep from the paw of the bear; that same shepherd who, in pangs of death, took the lion of hell by the beard and slew him; that same shepherd sits as King in the Jerusalem above, and all his saints delight to do him homage. All hail thou Son of David! Reign thou forever! Hosanna unto thee! Thine enemies cannot dispossess thee; thou hast smitten them terribly, and they shall yet feel the terror of thine arm. The shepherd reigns; Jesus Christ is king of God's church, and one of these days the reign of David will blossom into the reign of Solomon. We shall see Jesus Christ under a yet more glorious type, for he shall reign from the river even unto the ends of the earth. There shall be no war with the Ammonites, no war anywhere; all enemies shall have been put beneath his feet, and the kings of the nations shall bow before him, and they that dwell in the wilderness shall lick the dust. May that millennial splendour soon dawn, when the Son of David shall be king for ever and ever as the great shepherd, reigning over all lands. Think these five illustrations over, and there will be much instruction here concerning him who feeds his flock like a shepherd.

2. Now follow me in three *New Testament descriptions*.

Jesus Christ the Shepherd is described in the New Testament, as I dare say you all remember, in three ways. He is first of all spoken of as the *good* shepherd, next, as the

*great* shepherd, and thirdly, as the *chief* shepherd. I do not know that any other adjective is appended to his name of Shepherd. First, in the 10th chapter of John, you find him described as the *good* shepherd. “The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.” Goodness is the special excellence which seems to gleam in the character of our Lord in his earthly life and in his passion for the sons of men. As I look upon my Lord and Master here, despised and rejected of men, I know he is the great shepherd, but his greatness does not strike me; his flock is so few. We read in the Acts that “the number of the names together were about one hundred and twenty.” “Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but I, the Son of Man, have not where to lay my head.” Herein is goodness, but the greatness is concealed. When he saw the multitude, he had compassion upon them, for they were as sheep having no shepherd. Here is the good shepherd: he healed their sicknesses and wept over their sins -- here is goodness indeed. When it was time for him to die, he crossed the brook Kedron, and suffered till he sweat great drops in the garden; he went to trial and condemnation, and then to the mount of doom, to suffer, bleed, and die. Here is the good shepherd -- the good shepherd bleeding for the sheep. Can you tell me *how* good a shepherd Jesus was? Can you measure the height and depth of the extraordinary goodness that dwelt in him? -- so good that he saved others, himself he could not save -- so

good that when he rendered in his account he could say, “I have lost none.” He had kept them all safely, though he himself had bowed his head and given up the ghost.

You will find in Hebrews 13th chapter and 20th verse, he is called the *great* shepherd. Does that refer to his life on earth, and to his death? Not at all. Observe the connection. “Now the God of peace which brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will.” Do you perceive? He is not the great shepherd when he dies: he is the good shepherd, but he is the great shepherd when he is brought again from the dead. In resurrection you perceive his greatness. He lies in the grave slumbering; he is the good shepherd then, having laid down his life for the sheep. Life appears again in him, the stone is rolled away, the watchmen are seized with terror, and he stands out the risen One, no more the dying -- now he is the great shepherd. He manifests himself for forty days among his own disciples, and then at last, taking them to the hill of Galilee, a cloud receives him out of their sight, and up he mounts as the great shepherd. When he has told them to go to Jerusalem, they sit waiting till the time of the fulness is come, and suddenly there is heard the sound of a rushing mighty wind, and fiery tongues sit upon all of them. Who has given this boon to each? Who is it? This is the great

shepherd. He has ascended on high, and has received gifts for men; the shepherd still you see, but now he is the great shepherd, the shepherd riding in triumphal state through the midst of New Jerusalem, amidst the acclamations of angels, and sending to his sheep down below the precious gift of apostles and ministers of various orders, according to his own will. He was the good shepherd before, he is the good shepherd now; but he is also pre-eminently the great shepherd. Let us delight to think of this greatness of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us extol and bless him. Observe, carefully, that while the good shepherd lays down his life, that you may have life, and have it more abundantly, he is the great shepherd for another purpose. What does it say? "Make you perfect in every good work to do his will." Yes, he dies to wash away your sin, but he rises for our justification and your complete sanctification, that as he left his graveclothes behind him, you may leave your sins behind you; and as he left the tomb behind him, never to enter it, you may leave the old dead world in which you once lived, and live in newness of life.

We have a third text remaining -- the first Epistle of Peter, 5th chapter and 4th verse. Here you have the Saviour called the *chief* shepherd. When is this? In Peter he is not the good shepherd -- he is not the great shepherd; he is all that, but he is a great deal more -- he is the chief shepherd. When will he wear this title? Do you notice,

beloved, this one thing; let me have your hearts here. While he is the good shepherd he is all alone, no other mentioned; while he is the great shepherd he is still alone, and only a bare hint of others; but when he is the chief shepherd, it is implied that there are others among whom he is chief. Notice, then, that in the atonement Jesus is alone -- there is not one with the good shepherd: in resurrection for our justification he is alone -- no one aids the great shepherd: but at the second advent he will be with his people chief among many. Read the verse: "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." So you see Christ is the *chief* shepherd at the second advent; then shall the world be astonished to find that although alone in atonement, and alone in justification, he is not alone in service or in glory. Then every minister who has fed his sheep, every teacher who has fed his lambs -- all of you who have in any way whatsoever contributed under him towards the guidance, and the government, and the feeding, and the protection of his dear, blood-bought flock -- you shall appear. He has no crown, you perceive, as the good shepherd; we do not read of a crown for him as the great shepherd; but when he comes with crown wherewith his mother crowned him, then shall ye also appear with him in glory, having the crown of life that fadeth not away. I do not know whether this peculiar circumstance interests you, but it did me when I



observed it: *Good* in his dying, *great* in his rising, *chief* in his coming. It seems to me to gather such force -- *good* to me as a sinner, *great* to me as a saint, *chief* to me as one with him in his glorious reign. I pass, as it were, through three stages -- a sinner, then I look to the good shepherd laying down his life for the sheep; I reach higher ground, and I am a saint, I look to the great shepherd to make me perfect in every good work to do his will; I mount higher still, I die, I rise again, I walk in resurrection life, and now I look to the chief shepherd, and hope to receive at his hands the crown of life which he shall give to me, and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearing, the good, great, chief shepherd. May God give us grace, meditating upon these things, to know them and enter into them.

3. In conclusion I promised one or two *Impressive applications*.

The first application is one of *comfort and satisfaction* to you who are poor, needy, weary, troubled lambs or sheep of the flock. Our own text runs thus: "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd." What next? "He shall gather the lambs with his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." The lambs have not the value of mature sheep, yet they are the most thought of under the great shepherd. They might fetch the least price in the market, but they have the greatest portion of his heart. You needy, troubled ones, I want you to look here

and note down in our memories that though there are promises for all the saints, there are special promises for you. Jesus Christ will take care that the lambs and those who are with young shall be especially housed. Notice this in Jacob, whom I introduced to you as the toiling shepherd; when he met with Esau, Esau wanted him to accept a guard to go with him, but he said, “My lord knoweth that the children are tender, and the flocks and herds with young are with me: and if men should overdrive them one day, all the flock will die.” Jesus, the good shepherd, will not travel at such a rate as to overdrive the lambs. He has tender consideration for the poor and needy. Kings usually look to the interests of the great and the rich, but in the kingdom of our great shepherd he cares most for the poor. “He shall judge the poor of the people.” The weaklings and the sickly of the flock are the special objects of the Saviour’s care. A proof of this you will find at the 34th chapter of Ezekiel, 16th verse: “I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and I will strengthen that which was sick.” Inexpressibly comforting words to the broken, sick, needy Christian! Thou thinkest that thou art forgotten, because of thy nothingness and weakness and poverty. This is the very reason why thou art remembered. Jesus Christ, our loving shepherd, if he should forget those of us who are strong and in sound health, will be sure to recollect the sickly ones. He shall feed his flock like a

shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arms in his bosom. He shall gently lead those that are with young.

A second application containing *comfort* and *warning* too. Sinner, to you our Lord Jesus Christ now represents himself as being a shepherd who is come to seek and to save that which was lost. Here are his own words: “What man of you having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing; and calleth together his friends and his neighbours, saying Rejoice with me, for I have found the sheep which was lost.” Such is Jesus now, looking after stray sheep. Where are you, where are you now? The great shepherd comes after you; and Oh, what joy will be in his heart, what joy there will be in heaven, when the great shepherd shall throw you on his shoulders and bring you home.

But hark you. Did you ever notice that the same shepherd who saves the lost, will curse the finally impenitent? He shall separate them one from another as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats, and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall he say unto them on the left hand, “Depart, ye cursed.” What lips are those which pronounce these dreadful words? The shepherd’s lips; the lips of that same shepherd who flies over the mountains to the lost sheep, of

whom I trust it will yet be said, “We were as sheep going astray, but we have now returned unto the Shepherd and the Bishop of our souls.” That same seeker of the lost and gatherer together of them that are scattered, will say, Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. Oh, sinner, may you know the Shepherd as binding up your broken bones and healing your wounds, and rejoicing over your saved soul: for if you do not, you will have to know him in another and more terrible character, when he shall curse you, separating you from his own sheep as the shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats.

So we shall conclude with these words, which may be for both *saint and sinner*. Let it never be forgotten, that in all we have said about Jesus Christ, still, as a shepherd, he is pre-eminently to be preached as the suffering One. I began with Abel, and I must conclude with Abel. Zechariah has recorded these remarkable words of Jehovah, “Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord. Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.” O sinner, you have most of all to do today with the Abel-shepherd -- with the Shepherd dead at the altar; with the Shepherd with his blood crying up to heaven, with the sword of Jehovah in his bowels. You shall know about the toiling shepherd by and by; the Shepherd reigning in Egypt, the Joseph, you shall know soon; the

Shepherd of the separated flock, you shall follow ere long; the Shepherd reigning in Jerusalem, the David, you shall rejoice to serve; but now you have to do with the Shepherd bleeding and dying. Hark to these words, and I have done: "All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one of his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Herein is Jesus to be seen suffering, bleeding, dying, on yonder accursed tree. He is there, the Shepherd, to whom if we look we shall live, and live for ever. God enable you to turn those poor eyes of yours, and see in Jesus Christ your iniquity put away, Jehovah reconciled, and your souls eternally saved. *Amen.*

-- CHARLES H. SPURGEON.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

### THE STORY OF RUTH--(Continued).

**R**UTH was now at home with her mother-in-law at Beth-lehem, but it was soon a question with the two widows how they were to live there. There was, indeed, no fear, now that plenty had come back to the land, that they would be allowed to want: for God, in his laws given by Moses, had taken great care of the poor. In a number of ways he had commanded that they should be helped and relieved. So when Jesus came into the world, he was the friend of the poor. Nay, he showed how much he felt for them by choosing to be himself a poor man, and by preaching the gospel to them, when proud rich men did not think it was a good or needful thing to teach them. Then Naomi knew that her late husband had some land that would belong to any person who would be his heirs; but having no son to claim it, she could not get it back as yet. So the two widows had to think of what was best to be done to get a living. Now, one of the kind laws made by God to help the poor was, that they should be allowed in the time of harvest to glean after the reapers in the field, and keep all they could gather as their own. Any farmer who should have sent away poor people come to pick up the dropped stalks of corn in his harvest-fields, would have been regarded as disobeying God. Even if he had been very careful to get his

reapers to cut down the stalks on the edges and odd corners of his grounds, it would have been a breach of God's law. This kind care taken by God of the poor in Israel helped Naomi and her daughter now.

It happened that they had come from the country of Moab just about the beginning of barley-harvest, and the farmers all round Bethlehem were busy getting the grain cut down. Among them was a very rich man, whose name was Boaz. He was not married, and he was a relative of the husband of Naomi. He had a number of reapers hard at work from day to day. Now, one morning Ruth said to her mother-in-law, Pray, let me go to-day, and glean in the fields wherever I may happen to find people kind to me. Her mother-in-law said, Yes, my dear, go; and she went. She had no choice as to where she would glean; but it chanced, or rather it was ordered by God, that she came to where the reapers of Boaz were at work. So she began to glean. Not long after, the master himself came out of the town to see how his workers were getting on. In those days the farmers lived in the villages or towns all together, and went out and in to their fields day by day. So Boaz came out from his house at Bethlehem, to look at the way his reapers were cutting down the barley. He came among them like a good man, as he was. For as he got near to them, he did not simply say, Good morning, though that would have been nice enough from a master to his servants,

and, I suppose, is, after all, a kind of prayer; he wished them well in the name of the God of Israel. He said, "The Lord be with you." The workers must have been good people, too, for they answered him with a wish of the same kind, saying, "The Lord bless thee." I hope, at least, that they had not, in those simple times, got into a habit of saying, as many now do, "God bless you," with no thought. And I am sure the wish of Boaz was more serious than our kindly goodbye, which we use so often without thinking that it means, God be with ye. There was a foreman over the reapers in the field; and after a little while Boaz, having noticed a very nice person gleaning after the workers stepped to him and said, Who is that, the young woman gleaning there? The foreman said, That is the Moabitess that for love of her mother-in-law, Naomi, has come to live in this country. She came to me this morning, and asked leave to glean among the sheaves. I allowed her to do so, and she has been busy at her task ever since we began work, except that a little while ago she went away to rest for a short time. Boaz felt very much pleased when he heard that, and went straight to where Ruth was, and said to her, My daughter, hear what I say! Don't go to any other field than mine to glean, all the time of harvest. See my young women there; always notice where they go to work, and follow them. Not one of the reapers will say a rude word to you; and I will take care of that. And don't



take trouble to go home for anything to eat or drink, nor work on without refreshment; go whenever you are thirsty to the reapers' cans, and take freely of the water drawn for their use. At meal-time, too, come and share what the workers are eating. When Ruth heard the rich man, the master of the field, speaking in that way to her, she fell down on the ground at his feet and said, How can you take such notice of me, a stranger, and speak to me so kindly? He said, I have heard about you. I have heard how kind you have been to your mother-in-law, and now, rather than part with her, you have left your own father and mother in Moab, and are come to-day among a people you did not know before. May the true God, in whose land you have come to live, bless you, and reward you for choosing to cast in your lot with the people over whom he spreads his wings of protecting care. Ruth thanked Boaz very much for his kindness, and said that his words had comforted her; for he had spoken to her, though she was a stranger, as if she had been one of his own countrywomen. That day when the workers sat down to dinner, Boaz was with them, and Ruth was called to take her place with the rest, and the master sent her some food from his own hand. His kindness did not stop there. When dinner was over and the men went to work again, and Ruth began to glean anew, Boaz said to the reapers, Let her glean among the sheaves, and say nothing to her about it, by way of finding fault. Let fall, besides,

every now and then, quite carelessly, though it be of set purpose, some handfuls of the grain, and leave them for her to glean. When the workers saw their master take such notice of Ruth, you may be sure they did as he told them. So that first day she gathered a great parcel of gleanings, and when she had them thrashed, she had quite a large measure full of barley. The measure was one holding more than three pecks. This she took home with her to her mother-in-law, who was surprised at the quantity; and thinking that after so hard a day's work she must be hungry, she gave her some food that she had set past for her after her own dinner during the day. Then the two had a pleasant talk together about what had happened, and Naomi was very glad indeed to learn from Ruth that Boaz had been so kind to her. Then she told Ruth that he was a near relation of theirs, and thanked God heartily that he had led her daughter's steps to his field. She agreed that it would be quite the best thing to go always there till the harvest should be over, just as Boaz had asked her to do. So till first the barley and then the wheat reaping was ended, Ruth continued to glean after the work -people of Boaz, and all were kind to her.

Naomi was not content, however, with all this. She felt that she was herself getting old, and she wished that she could see her dear Ruth settled in a home of her own. Now, there was a law at that time in Israel, that when a

married man died without leaving any children, his brother, or nearest kinsman, was to marry the widow, and their children were to be counted as being the first husband's, that the farm or estate might not go out of the dead man's family. Naomi knew Boaz to be a near relation of Elimelech's, and of Ruth's husband Chilion; and she thought if she could remind Boaz of this law, that he would marry Ruth. So she made up a plan for bringing this thought of hers under his notice, and he was quite pleased with it, and said that he would carry it out at once, but for there being a still nearer kinsman than himself, and he must ask him first. Next morning, therefore, when the people were passing out through the gate of the town, he called him, and publicly asked him if he would buy the land that had been their cousin Elimelech's. He said he would buy it. But said Boaz, if you do that, you must marry Ruth as well. The man said there was a reason why he could not do that, and he gave full liberty to Boaz to buy the land; and to clinch the bargain and make it sure, he took off his shoe, as was then the custom in bargaining, and handed it to Boaz. After that Boaz married Ruth, and the whole town were pleased with the wedding, and quite loaded the married pair with blessings and good wishes.

In this way Ruth came to be one of the ancestors of the royal house of Judah. She was great-grandmother to David.

-----

## QUESTIONS FROM THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Can you find a text where Christ himself gives it as a proof of his being the Messiah, that the gospel was preached by him to the poor?

2. Can you find a passage in the law of Moses containing three very beautiful laws about leaving something, in field and orchard and vineyard, for strangers, widows, and orphans?

3. Where is the text against reaping the corners of the field?

4. Who was it that was found wandering in the fields by a stranger, and directed where to go to find what he was seeking?

5. Can you find a law allowing people going into a corn field or vineyard to eat of the grain or fruit by simply taking into their hands, without cutting the corn down, or taking any of the grapes away in a vessel?

6. What persons were they that acted on this law, and yet were found fault with by some who saw them?

7. Can you find a psalm which appears to teach that it was common for persons passing by reapers in a field to ask God's blessing to rest on them?

8. Do you recollect a great wonder which attracted the notice of reapers in a field, in the time of wheat-harvest?

9. Who was it that was in fatal danger when he was taking rest at noon-day, but escaped, from the generous conduct of one whose life he was seeking?

10. Who was it that was murdered when he was taking noon-tide rest on his bed?

11. Who was it that blamed his family for not asking a stranger that had been kind to them, to come home to their house?

12. Where is a kingdom promised to those who will kindly entertain an illustrious stranger?

13. What were the names of David's father and grandfather?

14. Where is Ruth honourably mentioned in a list of those from whose line Jesus sprung?

15. Where is there an exhortation to be kind to strangers?

ANSWERS to these questions are to be found in the following chapters:  
Matt. xi.; Deut. xxiv.; Lev. xix.; Gen. xxxvii.; Deut. xxiii.; Luke vi.; Ps.  
cxxxix.; 1 Sam. vi.; 1 Sam. xxiv.; 2 Sam. iv.; Ex. ii.; Matt. xxv.; Ruth iv. or  
Matt. i.; Heb. xiii.

-----

*Prayer.*

O LORD God, we remember that Jesus once spoke of Himself as a stranger among men, and said that He would bless those who should receive Him. We wish to open our hearts to Himself, and to be kind to Him in His poor saints. Help us to show right kindness to all that love Christ, and who may need our aid; and if we meet with strangers, let us sympathize with them, far from their own homes. Teach us always to bear in mind that we ourselves are strangers here, having no continuing city on this side of the grave. May we therefore learn to feel while on earth as strangers and travelers do, looking up to heaven as our home. Lord, make us all ready to be taken there at last, to dwell for ever with Thee, for Jesus sake. *Amen.*

-----

## EVENING WORSHIP.

HOLY, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty! Thou art worthy to receive glory, and honour, and power; for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created. Blessed be Thy Divine Majesty, who hast given us Thy servants grace, by the confession of a true faith to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and to worship one God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. We beseech Thee that Thou, who hast the hearts of all men in Thy hand, and canst turn them whithersoever Thou wilt, wouldst keep us steadfast in this faith, and in holiness of life, and give us grace to walk worthy of Thee unto all pleasing, who livest and reignest world without end. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm li.* 15-19.

WHEN I survey the wondrous cross  
On which the Prince of glory died,  
My richest gain I count but loss,  
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,  
Save in the cross of Christ my God:  
All the vain things that charm me most,  
I sacrifice them to his blood.

See from his head, his hands, his feet,  
Sorrow and love flow mingled down:  
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,  
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

His dying crimson, like a robe,  
Spreads o'er his body on the tree;  
Then am I dead to all the globe,  
And all the globe is dead to me.

Where the whole realm of nature mine,  
That were a present far too small;  
Love so amazing, so divine,  
Demands my soul, my life, my all!



## JOHN XVII.

THESE words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee. 2. As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. 3. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. 4. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. 5. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. 6. I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. 7. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. 8. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. 9. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. 10. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. 11. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom

thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. 12. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. 13. And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. 14. I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 15. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. 16. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 17. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. 18. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. 19. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. 20. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; 21. That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. 22. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: 23. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. 24. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where

I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.  
25. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. 26. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it; that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

-----

*Prayer.*

HOLY and Almighty God, Maker of our frames, Father of our spirits, sole Disposer of birth, and life, and death, Help us to approach Thy throne with trembling contrition! We are children of a sinful stock, and have ourselves by word and deed borne a willing share in the general transgression. No one of our race ever failed to offer Thee provocation and offence. Yet we dare to draw nigh to the seat of thy glory and power; for though it is high and lifted up, and we are of unclean heart and life and lips, -- though angels fall before it, crying, Holy, Holy, Holy! And we, in such a presence, are worthy to be abhorred -- yet are we invited thither, and looking up we hope, and wonder, and adore. High above all

principality, and power, and every name that is named, we behold, O Father, with thee in Thy throne One who wears the tokens that He bore our sins in His own body on the tree; for death is the wages of sin, and on Thy throne He is as a Lamb slain.

Open our eyes, O Lord! to see the great majesty and holiness of Thy Godhead. Fill us with deep awe! Bow down our proud hearts, till they feel that we justly merit death eternal by our vileness and our guilt; then deliver us from this guilt and all its punishment, and cause our hearts within us to wonder much, and love and worship, while we hear the Voice from Thine own glory, saying, I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore! Father, He “was dead,” not for His own sins, but for ours. Because He liveth, let us live also. May all fear of death temporal, all foreboding of death eternal, depart from us. While now we fall at His feet, may He say unto us, Fear not, I am He that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

We know, O Lord! that He, seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high, is expecting till His enemies be made His footstool. First of all His enemies, we would bow our necks under His feet. Help us, O help us, to make a full submission! All our sins and passions, all our pleasures and desires which are not conformable to Christ, do Thou

destroy. Bring every thought of ours into captivity to Him. Reign in us, O Lord! even in our mortal bodies, that sin may not reign any longer therein. Let Thy mind be in us, our members be instruments of righteousness to Thee, and our life so changed that we shall not live, but Thou in us.

And O strengthen us to challenge and to combat the enemies of our risen Lord! Make us good soldiers of Christ. Preserve in us the courage, vigilance, and ardour of a good warfare. Grant unto us, O our Redeemer! in great condescension grant unto us, the blessedness of being Thine instruments in turning some from sin to Thee. Do not refuse to use us because of deep unworthiness. Curse us not with the curse of barrenness!

Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive: Thou hast received gifts for men; yea for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell amongst them. Pour them down on all Thy church! Pour them richly, and with special glory, on the heads of all Thy servants who bear Thy gospel among the heathen! Pour them upon all pastors and teachers, upon all labourers in Thy work, upon all who love the Lord Jesus Christ! Renew in Thy people now on earth the zeal and efficiency of Thy first disciples. In this our age, and before our unworthy eyes, glorify Thine own self, by wonderful displays of saving power! Subdue all things to Thyself! Let thoughts, and men, and systems all feel and show the power of a hand

stronger than they -- Thine eternal hand of all might! Let the face of nations be renewed! Reign over universal thought! Turn to Thy service the hearts of kings, the counsels of governments, the pens of writers, the influence of all who sway the course, or lead the mind, of communities! Daily show an increase of Thy kingdom and of peace!

And O we meekly implore Thee in Thine exaltation to draw our hearts ever upwards after Thee! By nature and by sinful habit they are earthly, slow to rise, and ever prone to seek new enticements below. Open our interior eye -- the eye of faith -- to see Thee in Thy glory, to see Thy exceeding beauty and fairness, Head of our race, and sole divine adornment of our nature! Though now we see Thee not, make our faith to be the evidence of things not seen: and thus may we have such views of Thee, as will cause us to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory -- joy in being Thine! joy in contemplating Thy all prevalent intercession for us! joy in feeling that Thine eye of love is never off us! joy in looking to the hour when we too shall be raised up from the dead, and our vile body being fashioned like unto Thy glorious body, we shall sit down with Thee in Thy throne, even as Thou overcamest and art set down with the Father in His throne! So lead our affections to thine above!

And O, Eternal Father, grant that when the hour of our departure comes, we may be, like Thy servant Stephen, enabled to look up steadfastly into heaven, and to see the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God! And may we fall asleep, saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit! And to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, our one God, be honour, and glory, and dominion, and power, for ever and ever! *Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

#### *Morning.*

**Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty.**

The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.

For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up, and he shall be brought low.

And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.

Isa. ii. 10, 11, 12, 17.

#### *Evening.*

**Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee.**

Therefore turn thou to thy God: keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually.

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.



Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness.

Deut. viii. 5.      Hos. xii. 6.      2 Tim. i.7.      Col. i. 11.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.**

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation:

To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto to us the word of reconciliation.

1 John iii. 5.    2 Cor. v. 17, 18, 19.

*Evening.*

**Deliver me, O Lord, from mine enemies: I flee unto thee to hide me.**

Quicken me, O Lord, for thy name's sake: for thy righteousness' sake bring my soul out of trouble.

And of thy mercy cut off mine enemies, and destroy all them that afflict my soul: for I am thy servant.

Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is:

For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of draught, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

Ps. cxliii. 9, 11, 12. Jer. xvii. 7, 8.

## WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he a pleasant child? for since I speak against him, I do earnestly remember him still; therefore my bowels are troubled for him: I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord.**

Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, as yet they shall use this speech in the land of Judah, and in the cities thereof, when I shall bring again their captivity, the Lord bless thee, O habitation of justice, and mountain of holiness.

And there shall dwell in Judah itself, and in all the cities thereof together, husbandmen, and they that go forth with flocks.

For I have satiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul.

Jer. xxxi. 20, 23, 24, 25.

*Evening.*

**Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil.**

Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth; therefore let thy words be few.

For a dream cometh through the multitude of business; and a fool's voice is known by a multitude of words.

When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay which thou hast vowed.

Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.

Eccl. v. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**The Lord seeth not as man seeth: for man looketh on the outward but the Lord looketh on the heart.**

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

The Lord said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee: they have well said all that they have spoken.

Oh that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always.

1 Sam. xvi. 7. Jer. xvii. 9. Deut. v. 28, 29.

*Evening.*

**God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart.**

I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.

Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off?

Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord: do I not fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord.

Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord: and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?

2 Chron. xxxii. 31. Jer. xvii. 10. Jer. xxiii. 23, 24, 29.

## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.**

This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind;

Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:

Who, being past feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

But ye have not so learned Christ;

If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus.

Eph. ii. 19. Eph. iv. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21.

*Evening.*

**I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live;**

That thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto

him; (for he is thy life, and the length of thy days;) that thou mayest dwell in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.

And the Lord, he it is that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed.

Deut. xxx. 19, 20. Deut. xxxi. 8.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**But now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.**

For he is your peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;

Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;

And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby;

And came and preached peace to you, which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

Eph ii. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18.

*Evening.*

**By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;**

Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.

By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.

For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.

Heb. xi. 24, 25, 26, 27.      Ps. lxix. 9.

# HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

## FORTY-FIFTH WEEK.

### MORNING WORSHIP.

O GOD of all grace, who hast called us into Thine eternal glory by Christ Jesus, we beseech Thee mercifully to hear the prayers, which with hearty desires we make unto Thee; and grant that we, being clothed with humility, and casting all our care on Thee, may be sober and vigilant, and continuing steadfast in the faith, may resist all the temptations of the devil, and at length obtain the crown of life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* cxlix. 1-5.

COME, let us join our cheerful songs  
With angels round the throne;  
Ten thousand thousand are their tongues,  
But all their joys are one.



“Worthy the Lamb that died,” they cry,  
To be exalted thus;”  
“Worthy the Lamb,” let us reply,  
“For He was slain for us.”

Jesus is worthy to receive  
Honour and power divine;  
And blessings more than we can give  
Be, Lord! for ever thine.

Let all that dwell above the sky,  
And air, and earth, and seas,  
Conspire to lift thy glories high,  
And speak thine endless praise.

## 2 CHRONICLES XV. 1-19.

AND the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded:  
2. And he went out to meet Asa, and said unto him, Hear ye  
me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; The Lord is with  
you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be  
found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you. 3.  
Now for a long season Israel hath been without the true

God, and without a teaching priest, and without law. 4. But when they in their trouble did turn unto the Lord God of Israel, and sought him, he was found of them. 5. And in those times there was no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but great vexations were upon all the inhabitants of the countries. 6. And nation was destroyed of nation, and city of city: for God did vex them with all adversity. 7. Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak; for your work shall be rewarded. 8. And when Asa heard these words, and the prophecy of Oded the prophet, he took courage, and put away the abominable idols out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin, and out of the cities which he had taken from mount Ephraim, and renewed the altar of the Lord that was before the porch of the Lord. 9. And he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and the strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manasseh, and out of Simeon (for they fell to him out of Israel in abundance, when they saw that the Lord his God was with him): 10. So they gathered themselves together at Jerusalem in the third month, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Asa. 11. And they offered unto the Lord the same time, of the spoil which they had brought, seven hundred oxen and seven thousand sheep. 12. And they entered into a covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers with all their heart, and with all their soul; 13. That whosoever would not seek the Lord God of Israel should be put to death,

whether small or great, whether man or woman. 14. And they swear unto the Lord with a loud voice, and with shouting, and with trumpets, and with cornets. 15. And all Judah rejoiced at the oath: for they had sworn with all their heart, and sought him with their whole desire; and he was found of them: and the Lord gave them rest round about. 16. And also concerning Maachah, the mother of Asa the king, he removed her from being queen, because she had made an idol in a grove: and Asa cut down her idol, and stamped it, and burnt it at the brook Kidron. 17. But the high places were not taken out of Israel: nevertheless the heart of Asa was perfect all his days. 18. And he brought into the house of God the things that his father had dedicated, and that he himself had dedicated, silver, and gold, and vessels. 19. And there was no more war unto the five and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa.

*Prayer.*

O LORD our God, early would we seek Thee. Surely it is good for us to draw near to God: for in Thee alone, and by the renewing agency of Thy Spirit transfusing Thine image into our minds, can we find the happiness and rise to the dignity suited to the spiritual and immortal nature which

Thou hast given us. May the blessed assurance and the solemn warning contained in that portion of Thy word which we have now read profit us, being mixed with faith. Thou hast said that if we seek Thee, Thou wilt be found of us; and that if we forsake thee, Thou wilt forsake us. In Thy compassion and love give us grace to cleave to Thee, O God; for Thou art our help and our shield.

Enable us this day to lay hold upon the hope set before us in the gospel, that so we may be kept in that perfect peace enjoyed by those whose minds are staid on Thee. O Lord, open Thou our lips, and our mouths shall show forth Thy praise. Give us to maintain that spirit of lowliness which a proper sense of our guilt and weakness must ever inspire, and to cherish that godly sorrow for sin which worketh repentance unto salvation. Believing in Him who died for our offences, and was raised again for our justification, let our souls magnify the Lord, and our spirits rejoice in God our Saviour -- flowing out in gratitude, deep and fervent, to Him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood. And may the entrance of Thy word give light and understanding to us.

May the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, sustain the souls of all the afflicted and suffering, and inspire with the full assurance of hope the hearts of those who are appointed to death. Teach transgressors Thy way, O Lord, and let sinners be converted unto Thee; and at the close of this day

may many be found gathered into the fold of the Good Shepherd, and unto the company of those who shall eternally walk in the light of Thy countenance. May the labours of those who have the everlasting gospel to preach to them that dwell upon the earth, be everywhere accompanied by the power of Thy Spirit, and so prove effectual in pouring the light of saving truth into the minds of the ignorant; in awakening from their fatal security and presumption those who are at ease in Sion; in recalling from their wanderings those who are out of the way; and in guiding the steps and quickening the heavenward progress of those whom thou hast already led into the paths of righteousness. May such of Thy people as walk in darkness and have no light hear the voice of the blessed Saviour saying unto them, Why are ye fearful? be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you. Increase the faith and love of Thy true worshippers, that through the influence of these principles their minds may take on with growing vividness the impression of Him who is the image of the invisible God. These our prayers we beseech Thee, O Lord, to hear, for Christ's sake: unto whom, with Thee the Father and the Holy Spirit, be glory, and honour, and power, now and for ever. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O LORD, who hast taught us that all our doings, without charity, are nothing worth, send Thy Holy Ghost, and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of charity. Possess us with kindness and goodwill for all mankind, that our faith may work by love; and dispose our hearts, according to our ability, to administer towards the wants and necessities of those who are any ways afflicted or distressed in mind, body, or estate, and to do unto all men as we would they should do unto us. Give us thus to be followers of Him who went about doing good, and who hath left us an example that we should walk in His steps. May it ever be our earnest desire and endeavour to mould our thoughts, or feelings, and actions into conformity with His law as embodied in His word, and exemplified in His life and death. Grant this for Jesus' sake. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* xl. 8-11.

GREAT Mover of all hearts, whose hand  
Doth all the secret springs command  
    Of human thought and will,  
Thou, since the world was made, dost bless  
Thy saints with fruits of holiness,  
    Their order to fulfil.

Faith, hope, and love, here weave one chain;  
But love alone shall then remain,  
    When this short day is gone:  
O Love, O Truth, O endless Light,  
When shall we see Thy Sabbath bright  
    With all our labours done?

We sow 'mid perils here and tears:  
There the glad hand the harvest bears,  
    Which here in grief hath sown:  
Great Three in One, the increase give:  
These gifts of grace, by which we live,  
    With heavenly glory crown.

## LUKE X. 25-37.

AND, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? 26. He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he, answering, said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. 28. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live. 29. But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour? 30. And Jesus, answering, said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. 31. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. 32. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. 33. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, 34. And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. 35. And on the morrow, when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host,



and said unto him, Take care of him: and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. 36. Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? 37. And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

### 1 CORINTHIANS XIII.

THOUGH I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. 2. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. 3. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. 4. Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, 5. Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; 6. Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; 7. Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. 8. Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall

fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. 9. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. 10. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. 11. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. 12. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. 13. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

-----

## SERMON XLV.

“BEAR YE ONE ANOTHER’S BURDENS,  
AND SO FULFIL THE LAW OF CHRIST.” -- Galatians vi. 2.

COMPASSION is the law of Christ. The new commandment of Christ was almost the same thing -- “That ye love one another, as I have loved you.” But compassion is the law of Christ, not because He laid it down in words, but because compassion was His life. He, who left us an

example that we should follow His steps, showed that with Him no condition of life was too low for His esteem, no sin too guilty for His assistance, no enemy too fierce or cruel for His goodwill. And Christ is the law of His people; not His words alone, but the life He lived on earth, the word He spoke and the person he showed himself to be. These make up the law by which His people strive to walk.

Let me, my friends, on this Sunday, when love has been so especially the theme of our services -- when we have been reminded that of faith, and hope, and love, love is the greatest, though the others are so great, and that loving compassion is not *a* law, but *the* law of Christ -- let me speak to you, first, of the nature of that compassion, of which it may be said that it is *the* law; and next, of its application to the miserable and to the guilty. May God be with us herein! and after this act of worship is completed, may every one of us be able to say: "I have felt Christ in my heart to-night."

Now, what is Christian compassion? It is not that mere instinct or sentiment which moves every one to feel pain for the misery that he happens to see. Observe how the world treats that instinct. It is a pain, and one which we must not, without breach of decorum, intrude on others. Who would think, in any circle where the world's rules hold good, of attempting to awaken a feeling so painful? At the table, amid the gleam of lights, and the aroma of a score of

choice dishes, and the sparkle of the mantling wine, would it not be most improper to introduce into the general talk, meaningless, sometimes, as the twitter of many birds on a spring morning, some suggestion of the thousands on thousands in this country to whom the very crumbs and refuse of such a feast would be a luxury? And who would tell that fair girl in the ball-room hard truths about her poor sister, who made the very robe in which she flaunts and rustles through the dance -- about her poverty, about the long hours of labour by which she serves her sister's luxury, about the temptations to the easier life of shame which threaten her every day? We are forbidden to excite this painful feeling of natural pity. Misery is thus frequently banished out of sight; and the feeling that is rarely exercised for want of objects grows blunt, and dies at last. All compassion must needs contain a germ of pain; but this impulsive pity is almost all painful, for it feels powerless to help the suffering which affects it. It has no resource except escape. It says: "To-morrow I will try to do something," or it thinks that Parliament should interfere, or that the clergy should mend it. It escapes, because it has not the mark of true compassion, it has not made the grief its own. The priest and the Levite, who passed the wounded traveller on the other side, felt the pain of seeing him, and fled from it and forgot it; but the Samaritan that knelt beside him, and staunched his bleeding wounds, and

supported him tenderly, walking by his side -- he too felt the pain of his brother's condition, but he felt also the ennobling sensation of help, of having succour to spare, and of sparing it. His brother was burdened, and he was not. He would bear the burden with him, and for him. It was painful, no doubt, it was troublesome; but then it was brave, it was generous, and it was right, and that cannot all be pain which calls out bravery, and generosity, and duty.

Now the root of these two qualities, so different in their maturity, is the same. He whose soul is purified and educated by its intercourse with the sorrows of others, and he who classes other people's sorrows with heaps of refuse, among the nuisances that civilization ought to suppress, both began with the same instinct of pity; but one has learned from Christ that sorrow is no evil, and the other has gone on dreading it. In nothing else is the power of grace more conspicuous, than in the change from impulsive pity and instinctive good nature to consistent sympathy with sorrow. To bear the burden of others is to fulfil the law of Christ; and so it does educate us beyond all other habits in the knowledge of Christ; and it does bring us near Him; and so, too, does it give us something of the power of Christ, and enables us to cure like Him, to heal the wounded, to set the prisoner free. The heart that knows the secret of compassion has the key both of devotion and of labour. Let us look for one moment at both these points.

Christianity is not a law, or a book. It is a life; it is a certain change in us, which fashions our life, more or less, like the life of our Master. Observe the preaching of the apostles and the first teachers of the gospel. It was not discussions about moral science; it was not refinements about man's nature and a future state; they spoke of Christ. They knew Him; they found all in Him. Some people tell us now that this high worship of Christ as God grew with the ages, and that at first the church knew it but little. I might, if that were my subject to-night, show how this has been refuted; but instead of following out the evidence, I will only show you the Christian Church at two moments of its existence, and I will leave you to supply the rest. Now, Christ when He left His disciples did a very solemn act, as He bade them farewell: He broke bread with them, when He had blessed it, and He ministered to them the cup of wine, bidding them recall therein His loving sacrifice, wherein He shed His blood for the remission of the sins of many. Almost a century later, an emperor of Rome receives a report from one of his officers on the life and ways of that mysterious and potent people called the Christians, who were now emptying the temples and alarming the world. The officer found them still breaking bread together as part of their worship, and singing a hymn, he says, to Christ as God. Why, who is there who cannot fill up the space between, out of these two hints? There have been bloody

persecutions, there have been, in spite of them, much preaching, great success. Who cannot see what was the principle within them which had saved them from being slain, or frightened from off the earth. They had been worshiping Christ as God, and as the worker of a marvellous act of compassion for lost men. The ascended Christ never more to be beheld with eyes until at His coming they should see Him face to face, had yet been near them and among them, not as a lawgiver, strict and exacting, but as the consoler of hopeless poverty and sickness, as the friend of publicans and sinners, as pardoning His enemies and praying for them, as crowning a life of love by a death still more loving, that men might, through His suffering, be reconciled to their offended God. The Christianity of the first age was no mere formless germ, which after ages were to bring to shape. With eyes fixed on Christ it tried to live Christ; and to live Christ was to love like Him. They bore one another's burdens, and so fulfilled the law of Christ. Oh! miserable age in which we live, with your faith in Christ, as Son of God, beginning to falter, with whole tracts and regions of the social world sitting dark and frozen in want and utter ignorance, whilst we are quarreling one with another! and what is called the religious world has invented a religious worldliness, with slander and backbiting interwoven grotesquely with the forms and phrases of the religion of love. If aught can yet

restore us, through God's great goodness, it must be a return to that faith which made the Church of the first age strong as the rock on which it was built; it must be the sense that we are walking very close to One, under the eyes of One, whose life was one long act of sympathy, whose mercy to the poor, whose benignant tolerance for the guilty, whose meekness in the presence of His enemies, drew all men unto Him. He called down no fire from heaven; He passed no stern legal sentence to close the door of hope upon the wicked -- "Go and sin no more." He did not go through the land to sink lower by His severity a race already far too low, scathing, and withering, and hardening as He went, and proclaiming amidst the draught and barrenness that the rain and dews of mercy should drop fatness on earth no more; but He spoke words of compassion which thrilled strangely in the heart, and loosened the fountains of strange tears; and over the sky that had been as molten brass the welcome clouds gathered again, and rain fell down, and dews condensed, and the springs of water began to flow, and the parched corn sprouted, and the wilderness blossomed as the rose, and all the land locked in death woke up and lived, and smiled the smile of hope to meet the Redeemer's pitying smile. Compassion was the law of Christ to himself. It was also the power by which He moved a world, that had been impassive to the terrors of the law, and let the prophets



denounce it in vain. They were not perfect, those earliest believers, but that same power was in them as their life; and so far as they did prevail, it was because the Spirit sent of Christ was ever refreshing in them the memory of that marvellous life of love, and arousing them to imitate it. Sympathy with suffering is the highest piety; it is the means by which we contemplate Christ. "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

And that which was the power of Christ may make us mighty to deal with evil. There is something marvellous in that spirit of sympathy. I do not mean that it seems to find a positive pleasure in breathing the atmosphere of distress, from which so many flee with all their might; I do not mean that it seems to find time for every kind of well doing, though this we must all have noticed; I do not mean that the very heart and memory seem enlarged by it, so that a range of interests, ten times wider and more varied than its personal interests, finds room, yet, this, too, is true; but I mean that sympathy, though it is not talent nor energy, stands in the stead of these and does their work. The social good that is done in the world is not the work of its greatest minds, as men count greatness. These set themselves one great task, and gather up all their powers for its accomplishment. They are jealous even of minutes of their

time. They resist all distractions. The compassionate man gives gives up his time to others, and yet seems to find time for all things. Like the bread miraculously multiplied, he gives, and yet he gathers up for himself all, nay, as it seems, more than he gave. Then the power of compassion in finding its way to the miserable heart is great. Convince the wretched man that you know his misery, that you desire nothing so much as to put your hand to his burden, so that you may ease his shoulder, and you have already by that made it lighter. The very fact that one thinks it worth his while to stand by his side, and speak about comfort, is a presage of hope. Show the vicious man that you can see in him something worth caring for, and you take off thereby the despair that is at the bottom of so much vice. There is hope for him, he thinks, because you can hope. Let your enemy see that you have not room in your heart for any bitterness against him, and the point he aims at your bosom will drop, and his arm will fall powerless. He will begin to feel that you and he alike are in the presence of One who will not suffer any language but that of love, because He is love. “Be ye kind one to another,” says the inspired apostle, “tender-hearted, forgiving one another even as God, for Christ’s sake, hath forgiven you.”

How shall a compassionate spirit be able to deal with the misery in the world? It is so hopeless, it is so vast, so intertwined with all the arrangements of society. Is it not

better to fly than to wear out one's heart in fruitless pain at the spectacle of a great population fighting, but ineffectually, ay, against starvation? Starvation! that word is too strong. Men do not drop down in this rich city (London) and die of want. They *do* perish even so, but this is not the measure of our want. Why it has been shown long since that for every thirteen deaths which happened in years when corn is cheap, fourteen deaths occurred in years of higher prices. Then this fourteenth death -- and you have to multiply it by thousands -- was due to the inability to buy a little food, so that, if that be true, thousands have perished by mere want. Well, but the causes of it who can control? We are not masters of the wind and sunshine. The harvest, at any rate, is the hand of God. Is that plea always good? Within an easy walk eastward of this spot where I stand, a whole district has suffered through this winter from distress. Most of it is connected with what we call a commercial crisis -- that is to say, that two or three years ago all men were straining to get rich by every mode of trading. They formed companies, and drew into them, by false and impossible promises, the savings of the industrious; and our industrial system is such, that these false promises, the detection of which is a certain thing, are detected, not in detail, but all at once, and amid universal mistrust and panic trade stands still. The strong man that was climbing so bravely up the hill side to despoil the golden

castle at the top has fallen, and lies now bleeding and panting with the crag that he grasped lying on his chest. And the rich that trusted must reduce their luxuries; and the less rich that trusted must suffer some privation; and the poor that had nothing to entrust, their share is to starve and die. Tell me, then, have we nothing to do with commercial depression, this forming of foolish hopes of wealth, this coining of wilful falsehoods to get capital? Was this a matter of wind and sunshine? Almost every week our law courts are trying the question, whether a given man who trusted his money or name to another was foolish, or was wilfully deceived. That is man's work. Men have laid burdens on each other too grievous to be borne. "He that maketh hate to be rich shall not be innocent." Many were hasting to be rich, and when the collapse came the punishment fell heaviest on those who had least to do with the general deception. Go to them, you that have the spirit of Christ. Speak to them, and tell them that we are not all hardened too thoroughly to feel their pain. When a country has but a rich class, eating and playing, and a poor class, envying and hungering, history tells us what must happen. The fire of a great affliction, and nothing less, can purify that corrupted state. We have not come to that. Enormous luxury there is, and much laborious devotion to frivolity on the one side, and much bitter want and blind ignorance on the other; but there is a mediating spirit, the very salt of the

earth, between the supercilious indifference on the one side and the glance of hate on the other -- a spirit which tells the poor that we too are human, and our hearts bleed when human creatures die of misery. Be we of that spirit. Go, if your love is weak, and touch with your finger the misery, as Thomas fortified his faith, when it leaned toward despondency. Do not be satisfied with talking, no, nor with subscribing. Go somewhere, where, out of a heart of love, you may speak the wonder-working words of love. If you know not where to find a client, ask some godly friend, ask some minister of your Lord, to show you the way. Some have ventured, my friends, to criticise that well-known story of Lazarus, because the rich man was only rich, no worse than rich, not a cheat, as far as we are told, not a murderer not even an oppressor of the poor in legal limits. How comes it, they say, that riches have become a sin? Rich and indifferent he was, and nothing worse. But, oh, in those two he was far off from the law of Christ. Revolving round himself with his monotonous self-seeking, with his dinner savoury and digestible, his linen and the purple garment unimpeachable for taste and splendor, what worse disease was wanted for his poor soul that it should die? The palsy kills, though it is not fever nor consumption; and so self-seeking kills, though it is not murder nor uncleanness. Go and do your little part. Kneel beside some over-burdened creature, and ease his galled shoulder of its

load. You will come back from that holy act of worship -- for it is nothing less -- you will come back consoled in your own spirit and lifted up nearer to the mind of your Lord; you will come back convinced that compassion is a weapon and a power, that it can still melt the heart that misery has frozen, and dispose it more, far more, than books or sermons to believe in that higher marvel of compassion -- Christ dying that men might live.

And now, with a very few words on the special application of the text, I will conclude. The chapter begins you know: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."

My friends, amidst many tokens of evil, this century can show one step in Christian progress which proves that not all is lost with us. We have come to believe that not only may the sinful be forgiven, which no man can doubt, but that they may be redeemed from sin and its consequences, and restored to the path of holiness. The young outcast rescued from his profession of larceny, and made a sober, useful, and industrious man; the woman washed from the stain of shame, and working harmlessly with her sisters who have not erred like her -- these are our miracles, or rather, they are *His*, and very near akin to that

which He wrought, when the evil spirit was cast out, and the sufferer was seen sitting and clothed, and in his right mind. Here, however, if I mistake not, we all perceive a difficult and a divided duty. In dealing with sin something of austerity and legal strictness becomes the awful guilt of it: and we are afraid to do aught to obliterate the broad boundary-line that God's own hand has drawn between sin and holiness. We know we have not the wisdom of Jesus to temper warning and condemnation with mercy, and so we lean (meaning well by it) to the severer side. Do you remember a certain story about St. John? I cannot prove the truth of it; but it exercised a great influence when the Church was troubled with the question, whether those who had fallen from grace should ever be restored and forgiven. John had taken a great interest in a certain young man, who had been converted and baptized, and was full of promise. In the apostle's absence the young man fell back to evil ways, was entangled with bad companions, and became at last, after many downfalls, the captain of a band of robbers. The apostle, returning after a long time, asked the bishop with whom he had left him, about his convert; and he was told the truth, that he was dead to God. The apostle wept and rent his garment. He threw himself in the way of the robbers, and was taken before their chief. The young man recognized the face that carried his memory back in a moment to days of peace; and in utter shame he tried to fly.

“Do not fly,” said the apostle. “There is hope still. I will pray to Christ for thee. I would suffer death for thee, if it were possible, for Christ suffered for us. Stay and listen. Christ sends me to thee.” Overcome by this courageous love, the young man, with much shame and reluctance, was brought back to the flock of Christ; and the apostle left him not until he had prayed with him much and often, and exhorted him, and watched him, and seen him restored. Some one listens to this beautiful story, and admires it as a story, but thinks it would never do to imitate the apostle’s example here in London. Well, I will not debate it, but ask yourself this: That golden key of pity, have we not let it get too much tarnished by disuse? The cruel dismissal for a first fault has often been the beginning of ruin. The temptation was too powerful for the offender, but, oh, you have in your hand, perhaps, a greater power than any other to restore such an one in the spirit of meekness. *That* was your power, real because Divine. Have you tried it? Have you tried it as much as you might? You have been wronged; your trust has been betrayed; yourself insulted; justice, or possibly revenge masked like justice, is at hand: open the door and send the offender forth. In this world you will see him no more; and your dismissal is his mark of Cain so that others will avoid him. No; the regenerate spirit within you mistrust that tempting decision which cuts off hope. Do not decide, do not decide, till you have tried to



pray for him. You will then be able to weigh the thing calmly, to speak to him of sin and of God offended. It will be to him a voice out of another world, a voice which he will never forget to think of gratefully as long as he lives, whatever be the issue of it. I know not what your decision will have to be, but, perhaps, you will see it right to say: "I do not condemn thee. Go, and sin no more."

-- W. EBOR: (*Archbishop of York*).

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

### OF PAUL'S LAST VISIT TO JERUSALEM.

AFTER the Apostle Paul had preached the gospel in a great many other places, both in Asia and Europe, he came to settle for about three years in Ephesus. His preaching there was attended with much success. The whole town was stirred, and a great many persons were brought to believe in the name of the Lord Jesus. But this very success led to bitter opposition. There was a wonderfully grand temple to a goddess, called Diana, in the city; and a number of silversmiths drove a thriving trade in making little models of it in precious metal, and selling them to people who wanted to have a memorial at home of the goddess and her shrine. So when Paul's preaching made a great many idolaters turn to be Christians, and the sale of the silver shrines was not so brisk as it used to be, the silversmiths were very angry, and got up a terrible uproar in the town, which was like to have ended in taking Paul's life. The town-clerk, however, with much skill managed to quiet the tumult, but Paul who had been wishing for some

time past to visit Jerusalem, intending afterwards to go to Rome, thought it best to leave the place at present. So he went away to Macedonia, and saw the churches he had planted there, and preached to them. Then he came south to Greece, and staid for three months. After that he went over the sea into Asia again. He had at first intended to sail straight from some Grecian port; but he learned that the Jews had made a plot to catch him, and perhaps kill him, and so he changed his plan and went north to Philippi. From that he went to Troas, and there a wonderful thing happened. Paul was preaching, and made a long sermon. The church met in the evening, and the preaching went on till midnight. Now, among the hearers, there was a young man who sat in an open window, and the room was an upper room. Indeed, the window was in the third story from the ground. As the sermon was long, the young man became drowsy, and at length fell fast asleep. While sleeping he lost his balance, and fell from the window to the ground. The people rushed out, and took him up quite dead. But Paul went down, and put his arms about him, and prayed to God, and brought his life back. You may be sure the people were very glad, and would have still greater pleasure than before in hearing Paul talk with them. In the morning he left them, and sailed along the coast. I will not tell you, however, all that happened on the voyage. At last he came to Caesarea, and went up from that village to

Jerusalem. Only there was hanging about him all the way an expectation of trouble, and he was warned even by those who could prophesy, not to go on. He would not hear them, however; he was so determined to see Jerusalem again. I wonder if he was wrong in being so resolved as he was. Be that as it may, God brought great things out of his visit.

He had not been more than a few days in Jerusalem, when some Jews that had known him in other places where he had preached the gospel, began to raise an outcry against him, accusing him of being a foe to the Jewish people, and their law, and their city, and of having brought Greeks into the very temple to pollute it. They had seen an Ephesian with him in the streets, and they concluded that he had taken him into the temple also. So the whole city came to be in a tumult, and a number of men rushed on Paul and dragged him violently out of the temple, and would have certainly killed him, if the captain of the Roman troops had not heard of the uproar, and hastened to the spot with a number of soldiers, and taken him out of their hands. But thinking that he must be some great criminal to enrage the people so, or some ringleader in mutiny or rebellion, he ordered him to be bound with two chains. Paul, however, as the soldiers were carrying him away, got a word of the captain, and asked leave to address the people. The officer, surprised to find that Paul could speak Greek, allowed him, and he stood on the stairs and addressed the crowd in

Hebrew. He spoke very beautifully and clearly, telling them how he had been brought to believe in Jesus by seeing him in the heavens when he was on his way to Damascus. The people heard him for a time patiently, but when he came to say that Jesus had bidden him go far away to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, they cried out, Away with him, he is not fit to live; and began to throw off their coats, and throw dust into the air, and behave like madmen. And indeed, rage had made them mad. So the captain had to order him to be taken into the castle; and still thinking him to be some notorious offender, he told the soldiers to have him examined under the lash, as it was the cruel custom to do in those times. So they began to bind him, that he might be scourged. But as they were doing it, Paul, who knew that being a Roman citizen, born free, although his parents were Jews, he could claim all the privileges belonging to his rank, asked the centurion who was near, whether it was lawful to scourge a Roman who had not been tried and convicted of crime? The centurion, knowing quite well that it was unlawful, hastened to see the captain, and said, We must take care what we do; this man is a Roman citizen. A soon as the captain heard that, he came at once to where Paul was, and said, Tell me true, are you a Roman? Paul said, Yes, I am. The captain wondering, said, I myself had to pay a great sum of money to get the standing of a Roman citizen; how could you manage to buy it? Paul said, I did

not need to pay for it, I got it from my father; I was free born. After that there was no more talk of scourging him, indeed, the captain was rather uneasy, because he had gone so far as to bind him: so he was simply kept safe in the castle for the night.

The next day the commander, whose name was Lysias, summoned the chief priests and other members of the high court called the council, to come together, that he might know what they had to say against his prisoner; and freeing Paul from his chains, he brought him down, and placed him before them. Paul thereupon began very respectfully to address them, but had uttered only one sentence, when the high priest cried out to those that were near him to smite him on the mouth. That was a very wrong thing for one who was sitting as a judge to say: a wrong thing, indeed, in any case. Paul answered strongly, and said, God shall smite you, you whited wall! Do you sit to judge me by the law, and bid them strike me against the law? His words were severe, but were found afterwards to be a true prophecy; for the poor man who acted so brutishly was killed in the wars that soon followed. Perhaps, however, Paul spoke with too much heat, as it was not wonderful he should: for when they said to him, Is that a way to speak to the high priest? He said, Brethren, I was not aware of that; I know that the scripture says to us not to speak evil of the rulers of our people. It would seem that he was sorry he

had spoken quite so hastily; yet, as I have said, his words came true. After that, Paul said something which set the council a quarrelling among themselves, and the dispute got so hot that the Roman captain had again to take Paul away by force, for fear he might be torn in pieces. That night in the castle he had a pleasant visit. Christ came to him. I do not know whether Paul saw him or not, but he heard him say, Paul, do not be afraid; you will yet have to tell the people in Rome about me, just as you have done in Jerusalem. I doubt not, that after Paul's sleep was sweeter far than was that of some of his persecutors.

But the Jews that hated him and wished to take his life were determined not to be baffled. So next day, more than forty of them entered into a plot, and took a great oath, wishing dreadful things to happen to them if they either tasted meat or drink till they had killed him. Their plan was to get the chief priests to ask the Roman captain to let Paul come to them again, as if they wanted to put some more questions to him in a friendly way, and then to set on him by the way and murder him. The wicked priests and elders did not object. But Paul had a nephew in Jerusalem who came to know it, and he went and told his uncle. Paul hearing what his nephew told him, got an officer to take him to the captain, and to say that he had something important to tell him. So the young man told the commander of the plot against his uncle's life; and seeing

there was no time to be lost, Lysias ordered a troop of horsemen to be got ready, and four hundred soldiers beside, and beasts for Paul to ride on -- all to be prepared to set out at nine o'clock at night. Then he wrote a letter to Felix the governor at Caesarea, telling him that he was sending him a prisoner, who did not appear to have done anything deserving punishment, but was fiercely accused of the Jews in connection with some questions of their law, and was in danger of his life among them. He said further, in his letter, that he would order his accusers to go to Caesarea, and say what they had against Paul before Felix. All was then done as the captain ordered. The soldiers and calvary got ready. Paul was mounted in their midst, and at the third hour of the night they marched off, and went as far as Antipatris on the road to Caesarea. There it was felt that Paul was out of danger, and the four hundred foot soldiers turned back, and left the horsemen to take him the rest of the journey. It was not long before they brought him in safety to Felix.

That was the way in which Paul left Jerusalem for the last time.

-----

## QUESTIONS FROM THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Have we in the New Testament any epistle to the Ephesian church, besides the one Paul wrote to them?



2. Where was it that Paul was nearly stoned to death?
3. What part of Europe did Paul first visit? and where did he found the first Christian church in that continent?
4. What other apostle was honoured by God to bring the dead back to life again? and who was the person he raised?
5. How many express accounts of Paul's conversion have we in the New Testament?
6. Around whom, before Paul's time, was the cry raised, Away with him?
7. Where do we read of another of the apostles being bound with two chains?
8. Who was it that was blindfolded and smitten on the cheeks, when he was on his trial before the high priest?
9. Can you find a prophecy that was fulfilled by the scourging of Jesus?
10. When was an infant whose life was wickedly sought, carried away by night, riding in his mother's arms, to a place of safety?

ANSWERS to the foregoing questions will be found in the following chapters -- Rev. ii.; Acts xiv.; Acts xvi.; Acts ix., xxii., and xxvi.; John xix.; Acts xii.; Luke xxii.; Isa. l.; Matt. ii.

-----

*Prayer.*

O LORD, our times are wholly in Thy hand. Thou knowest when and where we have to die. Thou knowest if we have to go to distant places in the earth, before we are taken from it. We rejoice there can come no time, and there can be no place, where Thou shalt not be near us. All through our lifetime, in all dangers and changes, be Thou our helper, and when we come to the dark valley be Thou with us. Lord, we thank Thee that in our country and in these times there are no cruel persecutions of those who love Jesus. May they soon be found nowhere at all. May the Name Paul loved so much, soon be honoured in all the earth. To that name we now ascribe glory and praise.  
*Amen.*

---

## EVENING WORSHIP.

O GOD, who knowest us to be placed in the midst of so many and great temptations and dangers, that by reason of the frailty of our nature in many things we offend all, grant to us such strength and protection as may support us in all dangers, and carry us through all temptations; that, being faithful unto Thee, rendering unto all their due, and doing that which is good, we may be graciously accepted of Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* xviii. 1-5.

JESUS, thy boundless love to me  
No thought can reach, no tongue declare:  
O knit my thankful heart to thee,  
And reign without a rival there:  
Thine wholly, thine alone, I am:  
Lord, with thy love my heart inflame.

O grant that nothing in my soul  
May dwell, but thy pure love alone:  
O may thy love possess me whole,  
My joy, my treasure, and my crown:  
All coldness from my heart remove,  
May every act, word, thought be love.

In suffering, be thy love my peace;  
In weakness, be thy love my power;  
And when the storms of life shall cease,  
Jesus, in that important hour,  
In death, in life, be thou my Guide,  
And save me, who for me hast died.

LUKE XXII. 54-71.

THEN took they him, and led him, and brought him into the high priest's house. And Peter followed afar off. 55. And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them. 56. But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him. 57. And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not. 58. And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not. 59. And about the space of one hour after, another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this fellow also was with him; for he is a Galilean. 60. And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew. 61. And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter: and Peter remembered the word of the Lord,

how he had said unto him, Before the cock crew, thou shalt deny me thrice. 62. And Peter went out, and wept bitterly. 63. And the men that held Jesus mocked him, and smote him. 64. And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying Prophecy, who is it that smote thee. 65. And many other things blasphemously spake they against him. 66. And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people, and the chief priests, and the scribes, came together, and led him into their council, 67. Saying Art thou the Christ? Tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe: 68. And if I also ask you, ye will not answer me, nor let me go. 69. Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God. 70. Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am. 71. And they said, What need we any further witness? For we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.

-----

### *Prayer.*

ALMIGHTY Father, the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee; and now when the shadows of the evening have closed around us, may the Lord himself be a light unto

us. Give us to cherish sustained and abiding confidence in Thy fatherly love; and as we think of the unnumbered blessings pertaining to the life that now is, and to that which is to come, which thine infinite beneficence daily showers down upon us, let us more and more firmly resolve to give ourselves to Thee. Wherein we have this day sinned and come short of Thy glory by indulging vain imaginations, by hankering after the things that are in the world, by falling down in thought before any of those idols which are ever courting our homage, and by thus giving to Thee a divided affection, and to Thy service divided attention and energies, O most merciful God, forgive us. Let thy presence abide with us as a family. May we have love one to another as heirs together of the grace of life, and so strive to conduct ourselves in our several relations, and in all circumstances, that our prayers be not hindered, and that we may be helpers to each other in the work of the Lord.

May that spirit which quickeneth give effect to the preaching of Thy gospel from week to week, in this and in other lands. May He be poured out from on high upon all Thy servants who proclaim the message of the common salvation by the blood of Christ, and upon all the churches which are called by His name. In the spirit of brotherly kindness and charity may they strive together, with one heart and with one mind, for the suppression of vice, for the

overthrow of error and infidelity, and for cherishing a spirit of humble and warm piety amongst all who come within the range of their influence. May the people of the nations who, in this advanced age of our world, still ask counsel at their stocks -- who say to the wood, Awake! and to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach -- be speedily enlightened by the truth, and the idols be utterly abolished.

Bless our country, and prosper her in all her interests, civil and sacred. May all classes of her population be distinguished by their steadfast allegiance to Him who is Governor among the nations. Abundantly bless Thy servant, our sovereign the queen. Satisfy her with the length of days, and show her Thy salvation. May she rule in the fear of that Almighty being who liveth for ever and ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation. May her counsellors approve themselves men in whom is the spirit of wisdom, guiding them in devising and carrying out such just and enlightened measures as shall, by Thy blessing promote the true interests of the country. May our subordinate rulers, and those who are set upon the high places of the earth, be ever found acting in accordance with the law and the religion of Christ, that so their example may favourably affect those in inferior station; and by the general prevalence of virtue and godliness throughout the nation, may we be seen to be a people that the Lord hath blessed.

Thou, O God, hast prepared of Thy goodness for the poor. Sustain them under the hardships and trials of their lot: make them rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom promised to them that love Thee; and may those to whom Thou hast given wealth be incited by love to the common Father to sympathize with and aid the needy in their necessities. We beseech Thee, O Lord, to hear our prayers, and grant us acceptance through Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

---



## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

#### *Morning.*

**Thou hast forsaken me, saith the Lord, thou art gone backward: therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee, and destroy thee.**

But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die.

Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God: and not that he should return from his ways, and live?

Jer. xv. 6.      Ezek. xviii. 21, 23.

#### *Evening.*

**For the Lord shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone.**

See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand.

If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment, I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me.

Deut. xxxiii. 36, 39, 41.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever.**

Let the redeemed of the Lord say so whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy;

And gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south.

He sent redemption unto his people; he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name.

Let Israel hope in the Lord: for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption.

And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

Ps. cvii. 1, 2, 3. Ps. cxi. 9. Ps. cxxx. 7, 8.

*Evening.*

**Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart, and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes.**

And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it: and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.

Deut. xi. 18, 19. Mal. iii. 16.

## WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old?**

Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgressions, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.

Micah vi. 6, 7. 1 Sam. xv. 22, 23.

*Evening.*

**In that day shall the Lord of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people,**

And for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and for strength to them that turn the battle to the gate.

Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

Is. xxviii. 5, 6, 16. Matt. xxi. 42.

**THURSDAY.**

*Morning.*

**I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me: out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice.**

For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me.

Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple.

But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord.

Jonah ii. 2, 3, 4, 9.

*Evening.*

**Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.**

Who then is a faithful and wise servant whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?

Blessed is that servant whom his lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.

But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;

The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and an hour that he is not aware of.

Matt. xxiv. 44, 45, 46, 48, 50.

## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane.**

And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.

Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.

And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.

Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared.

Matt. xxvi. 36, 37, 38, 39. Heb. v. 7.

*Evening.*

**But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? Or the son of man, that thou visitest him?**

Thou madest him a little lower than the angels: thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands.

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.

Heb. ii. 6, 7, 14, 15, 16.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake:**

Having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me.

In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;

In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.

Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.

Phil. i. 29, 30.    2 Cor. xi. 26, 27, 28.

*Evening.*

**He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel.**

For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.

Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead, according to my gospel:

Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil-doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.

Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

Acts ix. 15, 16.    2 Tim. ii. 1, 8, 9, 10.



# HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

## FORTY-SIXTH WEEK.

### MORNING WORSHIP.

O GOD, who in the beginning didst cause the light to shine out of darkness, be pleased at this time to shine in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Let our prayers proceed from hearts purified by Thy Spirit from all hypocrisy and guile, and come up with acceptance before Thee, through the merits of Thy Son. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* cxix. 169-175.

O MAY my heart, by grace renew'd  
Be my Redeemer's throne!  
And be my stubborn will subdued  
His government to own!

Let deep repentance, faith, and love,  
Be join'd with godly fear;  
And all my conversation prove  
My heart to be sincere!

Preserve me from the snares of sin  
Through my remaining days;  
And in me let each virtue shine  
To my Redeemer's praise.

Let lively hope my soul inspire;  
Let warm affections rise;  
And may I wait, with strong desire,  
For bliss above the skies!

## 2 CHRONICLES XXIV. 1-2, 9-22.

JOASH was seven years old when he began to reign; and he reigned forty years in Jerusalem: his mother's name also was Zibiah of Beer-sheba. 2. And Joash did that which was right in the sight of the Lord all the days of Jehoiada the priest. 9. And they made a proclamation through Judah and Jerusalem, to bring in to the Lord the collection that Moses, the servant of God, laid upon Israel in the wilderness. 10. And all the princes, and all the people rejoiced, and brought in, and cast into the chest, until they had made an end. 11. Now it came to pass, that at what time the chest was brought into the king's office by the hand of the Levites, and when they saw that there was much money, the king's scribe and the high priest's officer came and emptied the

chest, and took it, and carried it to his place again. Thus they did day by day, and gathered money in abundance. 12. And the kings and Jehoaida gave it to such as did the work of the service of the house of the Lord, and hired masons and carpenters to repair the house of the Lord, and also such as wrought iron and brass to mend the house of the Lord, &c.

-----

*Prayer.*

O GOD, in whose hand our breath is, we render thanks unto Thee for life and health and for all the varied blessings which we enjoy. Not a moment passes over our heads in which we are not partakers of Thy goodness; for in Thee we live and move and have our being. With shame and contrition we acknowledge that we have not only failed to requite Thy kindness by yielding a grateful and loving homage unto Thee; but we have forgotten the God who made us, and lightly esteemed the Rock of our salvation. For Thy mercy's sake, O God, hide Thy face from our sins, and give us grace to love Thee more, and to serve Thee better than we have yet done. May the remembrance of our manifold shortcomings in the past, or the numberless sins of

which our own consciences accuse us, of the duties which we have failed to perform, of the opportunities of doing good to ourselves and to others, which we have allowed to slip away unimproved, lead us to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, and to seek earnestly of Him that grace wherein alone we can stand.

Grant, O gracious Father, that this day we may enter upon a course of new obedience. May the Spirit of Him who is Lord of the sabbath quicken our faith in Thee, and our love to Thee. May He beget and sustain in us the frame and temper of spirit suited to that day which Thou hast specially consecrated to Thy service. May every unholy feeling and principle be repressed in our minds; above every influence which causeth to err may we be raised; may our souls follow hard after Thee, whose right hand upholdeth us; may each one of us, wrestling with Thee in earnest supplication, say with him of old, who as a prince had power with God, and prevailed, "I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me;" and in the strength of the grace thus imparted may we glorify Thee in our bodies and in our spirits, which are Thine.

Bless the children of God, of every kindred and tongue, who are scattered abroad throughout the earth, and gather them together in one. May Thy servants this day preach the word in simplicity and godly sincerity, and may all who hear it receive it gladly. May the careless and the scorers

be moved by Thy grace to think upon their ways, and to turn their feet unto Thy testimonies. Bless those in the dwellings of Jacob who, through unavoidable causes, are prevented from waiting upon Thee in the gates of Sion; and graciously hear these our prayers for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O LORD, when the righteous perisheth, and merciful men are taken away, give us wisdom to lay it to heart. While we have them with us, dispose us to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake; and grant that we may neither by word nor by deed weaken their influence or hinder the success of their labours in Thy cause. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* lxxiii. 23-26.

JESUS! my redeeming Lord!  
In the hour of death be near;  
Let thy smile of love afford  
Full relief from all my fear.

Firmly trusting in thy blood,  
Nothing shall my heart confound;  
Safely I shall pass the flood --  
Safely reach Immanuel's ground.

When I touch the blessed shore,  
Back the closing waves shall roll;  
Death's dark stream shall never more  
Part from thee my ravish'd soul.

Thus, O thus, an entrance give  
To the land of cloudless sky!  
Having known it, 'Christ to live,'  
Let me know it 'Gain to die.'

### MICAH VII. 1-13.

WOE is me! for I am as when they have gathered the summer-fruits, as the grape-gleanings of the vintage: there is no cluster to eat; my soul desired the first ripe fruit. 2. The good man is perished out of the earth; and there is none upright among men: they all lie in wait for blood; they hunt every man his brother with a net. 3. That they may do evil with both hands earnestly, the prince asketh, and the judge asketh for a reward; and the great man, he uttereth his mischievous desire: so they wrap it up. 4. The best of them is as a brier; the most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge: the day of thy watchmen and thy visitation cometh; now shall be their perplexity. 5. Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide; keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom. 6. For the son dishonoureth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; a man's enemies are the men of his own house. 7. Therefore I will

look unto the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation:  
my God will hear me. 8. Rejoice not against me, O mine  
enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the  
Lord shall be a light unto me. 9. I will bear the indignation  
of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he  
plead my cause, and execute judgement for me: he will bring  
me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness.  
10. Then she that is mine enemy shall see it, and shame  
shall cover her which said unto me, Where is the Lord thy  
God? mine eyes shall behold her: now shall she be trodden  
down as the mire of the streets, &c.

-----



## SERMON XLVI.

“THE RIGHTEOUS PERISHETH, AND NO MAN LAYETH IT TO HEART: AND MERCIFUL MEN ARE TAKEN AWAY, NONE CONSIDERING THAT THE RIGHTEOUS IS TAKEN AWAY FROM THE EVIL TO COME.” -- Isa. lvii. 1.

THE connection of this verse with the preceding is striking and significant; for the prophetic division, or section, or song, of which both of them form a part, properly begins at chapter lvi.9; it is manifestly there that the prophet “changes his hand.” He has just closed a bright and joyous strain; full of gracious invitations and glorious prospects. Abruptly, as usual, he “checks his pride.” He opens at once a very different dirge. He speaks of sin and woe. He seems emphatically to intimate, that both the free grace and the full glory he has been celebrating must, as to their complete development and accomplishment, stand over, unfulfilled, until a course of guilt and wrath be run. And as it is the gospel grace and the gospel glory, ushered in by God manifest in the flesh, and completed at the second coming of the Lord, that the Spirit doubtless has in view, in the cheering revelation that is there ended; so it is evidently, in the first instance, that degeneracy of manners, which, after

the restoration from Babylon, went on increasing till the era of the cross and the destruction of Jerusalem, that is graphically and ominously described in the picture which follows. In that picture, the fact recorded in the text stands prominently out. "The righteous perisheth:" "merciful men" (men of kindness or godliness) "are taken away." And this feature, let it be observed, comes in at an early stage of the melancholy decline here traced; and it comes in, moreover, as, at that stage, the almost single and solitary harbinger of evil.

There are but three or four verses of the preceding description, immediately before the text. The low spiritual state of the nation and of the church is touched in a single sentence. The watchmen are blind and ignorant, dumb and loving to sleep, selfish and self-seeking. That of itself is a sore calamity; and it is the cause, as well as the sign, of calamities still sorer. But it is not very palpable and apparent. It is consistent with much comfortable plausibility of profession in the church, and much indifference and secure unconcern in the world. Even the people of God, ready always to hope the best, which usually is alike their duty and their safety -- for, alas! if they ever become desponding! hope against hope -- sanguine, trustful hope -- being under God their strength -- the people of God, generously confident, are, as it would seem, imposed upon. They think they see a great deal of earnestness and energy

in the age, and they look for indefinite progress in the right way. And the world, too, says that all is, or that all soon will be, well. Temporary disasters and drawbacks on the advancing career of prosperity, will soon be over. “Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and tomorrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant.”

In the midst of this treacherous calm, so apt to deceive both the church and the world, when all that can be charged against the church is the somewhat relaxed watchfulness of her shepherds -- a collapse probably, or an exhaustion, not unnatural after great excitement -- and when the world sees no serious obstacle in the way of its continued anticipation of prosperity, one only omen stands out, “The righteous perisheth, and merciful men are taken away.”

The fact itself that the “righteous perisheth, and merciful men are taken away,” is awful enough. But the explanation of it is more awful still. Well might the world lay to heart the perishing of the righteous man, if they would only consider that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come.”

For the Lord speaks here by the prophet, as he were reduced to straits, and brought to a stand. He does not willingly take the righteous away. There is, if we may dare so to speak, a conflict in the Divine Mind. Evil is coming, irremediable and inevitable evil. For the sake of the

righteous, mingled with the wicked, the Lord would fain avert the evil; that he might avert the evil, he would fain leave the righteous among the wicked. For ten righteous, he would have spared Sodom; and to spare Sodom, he would have left the ten among its inmates. But the limit of forbearance is passed. Eight souls only are found in Sodom to be saved. Evil must come. But before it comes, the righteous must be taken away from it. "Haste thee," says the Lord, with his flaming hand stretched out over Sodom, as he points Lot's way to the little city of refuge, "haste thee, escape thither, for I cannot" -- as if now impatient to have his strange work of judgment over, now that the righteous is taken away from it -- "I cannot do anything till thou be come thither."

I. There is a natural and very discernable connection, in the removal of the righteous and the progress of evil: the two things mutually act and re-act upon one another, and are mutually cause and effect to one another. Thus --

1. The advancing tide of evil tends of itself to sweep the righteous off the stage. An evil generation becomes impatient of what is good and holy; and the good and the holy, becoming weary of contending with a degenerate age, retire from the public view to mourn in private, or broken-hearted, quit the field by death. What examples has the world seen of men's perverse ingratitude and infatuation in their treatment of the excellent of the earth -- the very

salt that preserves the earth for them to tread on and pollute! And they whom men have put away from among them, have been not the sterner and more rigid upholders of righteousness merely, but the meek, the gentle, the amiable, the lovely. “The righteous man perisheth” -- “merciful men are taken away.”

The two qualities that form a perfect man are here associated together; the same two qualities that are distinguished and contrasted in that saying of the apostle, “Scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.” For the term “merciful,” or kind, pious, godly, implies generally the possession of that sweet and serene benignity of temper which springs from a heart right first of all with God, and right also with men. It is the superadded grace and beauty of what is “pure, lovely, and of good report,” engrafted on the firmer stem or stock of what is “true, and venerable, and just.” But even the combination, in their highest perfection, of both of these elements of holy virtue, will not always make the righteous and the merciful tolerable to an evil age. Nay, it would almost seem as if, not unfrequently, it was this very feature of mild benignity and kindliness of disposition, that disqualified its possessor for coping with the perverse generation of his fellows.

Hence, perhaps, an illustration may be drawn of the wisdom and goodness of God, in raising up, for critical

times, men not destitute at all of the genial quality, nay possessing it in ample measure -- for none ever did good without it -- but yet distinguished in the eyes of men rather for hardier and more rugged features. It was Luther, and not Melancthon; it was Calvin at Geneva, and Knox among ourselves; and at a later era, it was not Leighton, with all his holy beauty, but such men as Henderson, and Rutherford, and George Gillespie, that the Great Head of the Church raised up and fitted, for doing is hard work, fighting his desperate battle, and maintaining His persecuted cause. True, these worthies were, one and all of them, men of large heart and fine feeling, as well as of indomitable courage and resolution. But in their own times, and to their own contemporaries, in the church as well as in the world, they stood out as sternly righteous rather than merely kind and good -- to be feared, rather than to be loved; and this very impression contributed to their success: they persevered when souls less resolute would have given in; they commanded awe, where others might have been contemned.

And yet, is not this very thing a proof of the evil of the age that has them -- that no soft voice will win its ear, that sons of thunder must be sent to shake it, that if God has any good work to do in it, it must be by men with nerve enough to make all softer sentiments give place to the stern defiance of the patriot, the confessor's bold front, and the martyr's

tearless eye? Ah! they are indeed the meek and the merciful of the earth -- they whom an evil age will not tolerate, and on whom, as it hastens to get rid of them, it would fain try, for its own apology or defence, to fasten the imputation of violence and severity. It was when Stephen was in the very act of crying, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge," that, buried beneath the shower of stones, he fell asleep. And in the case of a greater than Stephen, even of Him who alone is, by way of eminence, the Righteous Man -- when He perished, it was with the accents lingering on his lips, "Father forgive them; for they know not what they do."

It was thus, with their own hands, that the Jews weeded out from among them the righteous and the merciful. Beginning with the Lord of glory himself, who "came unto his own, and his own received him not," they "denied the holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be given to them." Thereafter "the blood of his martyr Stephen was shed;" and at that time "there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem, and the disciples were all scattered abroad."

O Jerusalem! Jerusalem! thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee! Couldst thou not suffer that wholesome leaven of the infant church but a little while within thy bosom? And even of the apostles remaining behind, must James be slain with the sword to please thee, and Peter be cast into prison? Alas! alas! It is to

be thy policy to the end. The righteous pass from within thee -- merciful men are taken away -- and so far thou gainest thy desire. But evil comes more and more. Crimes, disorders, and dissensions increase. Yes! and soon the Roman armies are round about thee: the roman eagle is in the holy place. But of the righteous, of the merciful, there are some that are still with thee; even yet thou hast believers in Jesus in the midst of thee. But all in vain. Still the evil comes more and more; every man's hand is against his brother; lawless lust reigns; blood is spilt like water; there is great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world till this time, no, nor ever shall be: when, lo! As at a signal from above, warned by their Master's prophecies, the last remnant of the Christians pass out and pass away. And as they enter their city of refuge, on a hill apart -- suddenly, in a moment, the final ruin descends; Jerusalem is a desolation, and "the righteous have been taken from the evil to come."

Surely these things are written for our learning. It may not be by violence that the age now seeks to get rid of the righteous and the godly. Ay, but there are other ways of thrusting them aside; yes! and of so crushing their spirits that they feel as if they had nothing for it but to sigh and cry in secret, or to droop and pine away and die. Examples may be found in abundance in society, both in private and in public life, to illustrate this natural law, so to speak, of



action and re-action between the removal of the righteous and the advance of evil.

We might illustrate the principle as applicable to the family, to the social circle, to the church in its several branches and congregations, to the state, the senate, the cabinet, the council-board and election-room, everywhere throughout the kingdom. Thus Isaiah denounces “the rebellious people which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things; speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits.” Jeremiah also exclaims: “The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so; and what will ye do in the end thereof?” And Paul predicts concerning hearers of the gospel, that “the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears.” Thus, also, Ahab sent Micaiah to the prison, and Zedekiah consigned Jeremiah to the pit. It is a common expedient of all bodies of men, to put away, whether by fair means or by foul, what disturbs and reproves their doings. Thus under various pretences and by various contrivances, society contrives to exclude from its entertainments and its ordinary transactions of business, the name and the spirit of Christ. Thus a church contrives to rid herself of the presence of the best and holiest of her ministers and people, because the standard set up by them is too high, and their

attachment to their only Head and King is too uncompromising. In all such instances, the parties taking this course may gain their end; they may have their reward. The more sensitive and timid may shrink from the rude strife, and even the boldest may seem to stagger. And when the day is won, when the righteous and the godly are silenced and removed, evil may come as it pleases -- iniquity may rush in as a flood. The only tolerated watchmen will be "the blind, the dumb, the sleepers who lie down longing to slumber, the greedy who can never have enough;" and men at last rejoicing in having the field all to themselves, exulting in their unbroken and undisturbed impunity, may cry to one another, "Come ye, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and to-morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant."

Before leaving this view of the subject suggested by the text, two practical remarks may be made: --

1. The righteous and the merciful or meek themselves should be aware of accepting too soon or too easily their dismissal from the arena -- their discharge from the stern strife of principle and duty. The righteous perisheth at his post -- he does not quit it: merciful men are taken away -- they go not willingly, at their own discretion or by their own choice. It may be a weary and irksome task, to persevere in forcing our intimacy on a reluctant friend, or our warning on undutiful children, or domestics, or

neighbours, or our testimony on a declining church, or our remonstrance on societies that treat us and it alike with contumely and scorn. It is a thankless toil, to continue plying with holy means and influences an age and generation that will neither appreciate our endeavours, nor repay them; and often, very often, may the man of spiritual taste and refinement long to shrink into himself, and bury in the calm repose of a meditative or domestic quietude the vexations and disappointments of his active struggle with the world's sin and woe. "Oh! that I had wings like a dove, that I might flee away, and be at rest." But if we consider that our retirement will be just the signal for evil coming -- that our retreat will only precipitate the impending ruin -- we will not, we cannot, turn and flee. And let us not say that our presence can do but little, that our co-operation is a small matter, that we, from our insignificance, will scarcely be missed at all. That is not the question. The righteous, however weak, stands till he perisheth. Merciful men, however little they can do, wait upon the doing of it till they are taken away. Would we have the coming of evil hastened? Is the chariot of sin moving too slowly? If not, then be up and doing: whatever our hand findeth to do, let us do it with our might: and let no provocation, however irritating; no resistance, however obstinate; no ill-success, however protracted; no disappointments, no reproaches, no coldness of friends, or violence of foes, ever tempt us to the

sin of spiritual suicide or self-murder, by making us weary of well-doing, or preventing us from continuing “stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as we know that our labour is not in vain in the Lord.”

2. To those who may be putting away from themselves, or contributing to put away from society, and from the influence they ought to have in society, the righteous and the merciful, a single word of expostulation may be addressed. It is surely a serious matter to trifle with one of God’s best gifts to an evil world. Others we have always with us -- of the profane and the ungodly there will always be enough in the world -- but these we have not always. Oh! remember, how precious on this earth is the influence of a righteous man; and how precarious! A single whisper of calumny, a breath of suspicion, may cause it to perish for ever; a hasty word of passion, a careless smile of ridicule, a jest, an idle story, may take from the character, the example, the testimony of a man of God, all their power to move or to melt the hearts of his fellow-men. Ah! do Christians never thus destroy or mar one another’s means of doing good? Alas! are good men so plentiful in the world that the cause can afford to sacrifice the reputation of any one of them? The righteous will perish soon enough without our casting a stone at him. Merciful men will not tarry too long for our good or the world’s. There are men

enough to kill the prophets, though we hold our hand -- to kill their characters, though we hold our peace.

II. But there is more in the text than an ordinary rule, or law, or principle of human affairs: there is in it a very special providence of God; and it is that providence that the Spirit would have us to lay to heart; it is the reasons of that providence that he would have us to consider when he speaks of the righteous perishing and merciful men being taken away.

In the first place, this perishing of the righteous, and taking away of the godly, is evidently a dispensation of mercy to themselves: they are taken from the evil; they rest from their labours; they fall asleep in Jesus; they depart to be with Christ; they go to be where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest. It is true they are taken from the good, as well as from the evil to come: and hence they may often be in a strait betwixt the two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, while, nevertheless, to abide still in the flesh may, for some good end, be needful. Nay, in ordinary circumstances, the people of God are represented in scripture as loving many days, and desiring life, that they may see good. "Truly, the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun. I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days. O spare me, that I may recover strength before I go hence and be no more." This is almost the invariable

language of the saints in scripture. Early death is deprecated as a calamity; prolonged life is anxiously, importunately, and well-nigh impatiently, solicited as a boon (Isa. xxxviii.) Nor is this strain of thought peculiar to the Old Testament; there are traces of it also in the New. Aged Simeon, indeed, gladly sings, "Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." But, at all events, he had already seen a good old age; and it is simple acquiescence and contentment, not by any means vehement desire, that his hymn expresses. Paul, again, speaks of its being "far better" -- and of his "desire -- to depart and to be with Christ;" but not to speak of his entire willingness to remain, even in suffering and bonds, and of the state of absolute indifferency to which he ultimately brings his mind -- "To me to live is Christ, and to die gain" -- we must remember the trying circumstances of the church and of the times, which might well recall to Paul's mind the very privilege of our text, and make him wish to be taken from the evil to come. On the other hand, John, narrating the Lord's saying to Peter concerning him, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me;" and the impression which, in consequence, went abroad that he was not to die, seems to represent such a destiny as an object of envy; and

Paul himself tacitly recognizes a certain advantage in being alive and remaining unto the coming of the Lord, when he thinks it necessary, as it were, to counterbalance that advantage by the assurance that such as enjoy it shall not prevent, or have the start of, the buried saints, for “the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

But, however this may be, and however even believers may naturally and lawfully desire length of days, their removal at any stage of their pilgrimage can never be untimely. They perish; their mortal bodies rest in the gloomy grave, they go the way of all flesh; we have taken our last look at the beloved face, we have heard the last accents of the familiar voice, we have received the latest sigh of the departing spirit, he whom we loved sleepeth -- Lazarus is dead. But the dust in the tomb is still united to Christ; and the free soul has gone to the Saviour's bosom. Would we bring back the lost one to this weary world? Has he entered into rest too soon? Too soon, alas! for us; but surely not too soon for himself! Could we have the heart to wish him here again? Good he might have seen -- good he might have done -- in the land of the living. But the evil -- oh! the evil he might have had to witness and endure, especially in these ominous times on which we have fallen! Yea, Lord, thou doest well to take away the righteous from

the evil to come. He had his own share of the evil that has come already: he had his own share of the common sin and sorrow, and his own share also of his Master's cross. It was time for him to depart; he was ripe for rest and glory. Yes! Our sorrow is neither joyless nor hopeless when it is the righteous that perisheth, and the merciful men that are taken away. In their case, there is an ample compensation and equivalence for what we lose in what they gain. Even as to the work and service for which we might most have wished them to be spared, they may really be taken from the evil to come. They might have lived to see their fondest hopes of usefulness blighted, and their best and fairest plans disconcerted. They might have lived to endure the contradiction of sinners against themselves, to be vexed and wounded by the inconsistent profession and unsteadfast walk of the people whom they sought to guide in the right way. They might have lived to go on sowing in tears, without ever sensibly reaping in joy. They might have lived, still all day long to stretch forth their hands to a gainsaying and perverse generation.

For such to be taken away is a blessing indeed. The righteous, the merciful, are ready to go. But what shall we say of the ungodly and sinners? where shall they appear? They, too, are taken away prematurely, and, in a sense, they are taken from the evil to come: from seeing many of the fruits and consequences of their sin, from many a broken



heart and many a ruined soul, from degradation, disease, and slow decay, inevitable had they been spared -- they are suddenly and abruptly taken away. But, alas! from all good also they are taken away for ever -- from their corn and wine and oil; from a preached Christ, a striving Spirit, a waiting God, from all means of grace and hope of glory, they are taken away for ever. Oh! that they were wise, that they would consider this, that they would remember their latter end! Blessed are they who are taken *only* from the evil to come.

But, secondly, the pith and substance of the lesson in the text is the solemn and mysterious announcement implied in it, that evil is to be expected when the righteous is taken away. And when at any time, and in any circumstances, the removal of the righteous becomes more than ordinarily frequent, the coming evil may be apprehended as likely to be all the greater. It may be evil of a temporal kind -- such as visitations of disease and famine as God has sometimes suspended over us, in these lands, for anxious months or years; or it may be spiritual evil -- such as the evil of faithless watchmen, and a secure and carnal and contented people. We profess not to prophesy, we presume not to guess; we merely note the fact of the righteous perishing, and merciful men being taken away. And, in conclusion, if these things be signs of coming evil; if the falling of our standard-bearers is, indeed, judicial and ominous; if darker

trials and harder struggles are before us; or if spiritual deadness threatens us: is this a time for lethargy or supineness? Are we to fold our hands in helpless and desponding inactivity? Nay, rather to your tents, O Israel. Let us ply the throne of grace; let us ply the hearts of men. If the fall of our champions and captains is to be the signal for a fiercer onset of the foe -- if the taking away of the righteous is the presage of coming evil -- then let us, as the forlorn hope, if need be, cast ourselves into the breach; and if we perish, we perish taken ourselves from the evil; while if we altogether hold our peace, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise from another place, but we shall be destroyed. -- R. S. CANDLISH, D. D.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

### HOW PAUL CAME TO BE SENT TO ROME.

SOME five days after Paul had been brought to Caesarea, his enemies followed him for the purpose of accusing him before Felix the governor. They brought an orator down with them, and he made a swelling speech full of big words, and charged Paul with being a very bad man indeed. But the apostle told Felix the truth so calmly and clearly, that the governor would not condemn him, but put the case off till Lysias should be able to come down to Caesarea. So he gave Paul in charge to a centurion, but said he was to have every freedom that could be given him, so that he was kept safely. All his friends that pleased were to be allowed to see him, and do him any kindness they had in their power. The governor even sent for him often, and talked with him. One day especially, his wife, who was a Jewess, was with him, when Felix asked Paul to tell him about the faith in Christ. And when Paul was speaking, and setting before his two hearers the great truths and duties of Christianity, particularly when he talked solemnly about being just and temperate, and about the future judgment, the governor began to tremble, and said, For this time, Paul, leave me; when I have leisure I will send for you again. He did call him often, but I do not think that he ever found the hour

convenient for hearing Paul on the same subject. He rather had a thought that perhaps the apostle would offer him money, to bribe him to let him go free, and so liked frequently to see him. Two years passed in this way, and then one Festus came into the room of Felix; and Felix, wishing to please the Jews when leaving his place, left Paul a prisoner.

The new governor having gone to visit Jerusalem, the high priest and chief Jews went to him, and told him about Paul, and asked him to bring him up to Jerusalem to be judged. They intended to kill him by the way. The governor, however, said No: he would keep him still at Caesarea; he would himself very soon be returning to that town, and he would lose no time in hearing the case. He bade them therefore go down as many of them as could, and say there what they had against him. Festus returned to Caesarea in about ten days, and number of the Jews also went down. The very next day, Paul was brought to trial. A great many complaints were brought against him; but he answered clearly, and showed that he had done his enemies no wrong, neither had he committed any offence against the Roman power. After a time, Festus asked him if he would go up to Jerusalem, and be judged there. Paul said at once he would not go. He said he had done no hurt to the Jews, and that Festus must know that quite well. He was quite ready to be tried if he had been guilty of any crime, but,

being innocent, he would not agree to be given up to his foes. He said he was at Caesar's judgment-seat, and he would not go to any other tribunal. Then knowing that if he appealed to the emperor himself the governor durst not lawfully send him to any other place than Rome, he said, I appeal unto Caesar. Festus talked with his counsel for a little, and then answered, You shall go to Caesar; I will make preparations to send you. But before an opportunity came, an interesting thing happened.

There was a Jewish ruler, called Agrippa, who had succeeded his father as king, not over all his dominions, but a part of them, and had been acknowledged by the Roman emperor, and had also been appointed to look after the temple in Jerusalem, with the right of naming the high priest. He knew very well about the laws and customs of the Jews. He was one of the family of the Herods. One day, not long after Paul had appealed to Caesar this King Agrippa, with his wife, came to pay Festus a visit. They stayed with him a long time, and no doubt there was a great deal of feasting and pomp. At last Festus thought he would speak to Agrippa about Paul. So he told the story, and Agrippa was so much interested that he said he would like himself to hear a man like that. You shall hear him to-morrow, said Festus. Next day, accordingly, there was a gathering of the chief men of the place, and Roman officers, in a great hall; and King Agrippa and his queen came in

great state, and Paul was brought out and set before them. Festus made a little speech to Agrippa and all around, saying that, not knowing very well what to write to his master the emperor about this prisoner, he had brought him here to-day, that he might be fully examined before them all, especially the king, in order by their help to find out what should be said to Caesar. King Agrippa, on hearing that, said to Paul, You are allowed to speak and tell us all about yourself.

The good and brave apostle held out his hand -- while a chain hung from his arm, by which he was fastened to a soldier standing by -- and began his speech. He said he was happy to answer for himself before the king, because he knew him to be well acquainted with what the Jews believed and practised. He went on to say, that he was now found fault with on account of his believing in what all their fathers hoped for. He asked, looking at all around, Why should you think that God is not able to raise the dead? And then he went on to tell the story of his own conversion. He told it so clearly, so earnestly, so powerfully, that every one hearing him was struck. Festus could not understand his story, or his zeal in telling it. He called out at the end, You are beside yourself, Paul; your great learning has made you mad. No, no, said Paul, I am not mad, most noble Festus; every word I speak is the simple, sober truth. The king knows about these things; for they were not done in a

corner, and I speak, therefore, boldly before him. He then looked straight to the king, and said right out, King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know you do. Agrippa was much moved, and said, Paul, in a little you would persuade me to be a Christian. Some people think he said this with a sneer; some think he was quite in earnest. Paul answered as if he took his words to be in earnest. He said, I would to God, that not only you, O king, but all that are here to-day and have heard me speak, were in a little or a longer time just what I myself am, except for these bonds. With that he showed again his chained arm. As he did this, speaking so fervently, the king rose up, and the governor and all the rest followed his example. We do not know whether any of them did become Christians, but we may hope that Paul the prisoner did not preach in vain that day. At all events he produced an impression on mens' minds, that he was no criminal deserving of punishment. For when those who had heard him had gone aside to talk among themselves, the common opinion was that he had done nothing deserving death or imprisonment. Agrippa said to Festus, You might have set him at liberty without the least hesitation, if it had not been that he has appealed to the emperor. So it turned out that Paul's own words came to settle the matter of his going to Rome. The providence of God was bringing it it about; for there was work waiting for

the apostle in the great city, and after that, rest from his work by martyrdom.

A short time after these things, it was resolved to send Paul off to Italy, and a centurion with a company of soldiers took him in charge, and embarked aboard a ship that was going to set sail. But there were changes and dangers to be gone through before he should reach the Roman capital. The next story will be about storm and shipwreck.

-----

## QUESTIONS FROM THE BIBLE STORY.

1. What was the name of the orator that was taken by the Jews to Caesarea, for the purpose of making a speech against Paul?
2. Where in the Gospels, do we meet with the story of a pious centurion, whom Jesus commended greatly?
3. Where do we read about a pious centurion that lived in Caesarea, and was much favoured by God?
4. Who was it that often heard a preacher and prisoner gladly, and did much that he bade him, but ended by putting him to death in his prison?
5. Can you tell how many rulers of the family of Herod are mentioned in the new Testament?
6. What was the name of Agrippa's queen?



7. Where do we read of the preaching of the Saviour producing astonishment among his hearers, for the power it possessed?

8. Where do we read of the preaching of an apostle piercing a great many hearts?

9. What two persons appeared before kings to explain things that had perplexed them, and were rewarded with chains of gold?

10. When were two good men set at liberty when they were prisoners, by the magistrates coming and entreating them to go free, and leave the place?

11. When, and by whom, was Christ supposed to have gone out of his mind?

12. By what little word are we enabled to know that Paul had some companion when he sailed away from Caesarea to Italy?

13. Where does Paul himself refer to his coming martyrdom?

14. What other apostle refers beforehand to his approaching death?

15. When did Jesus foretel the manner of that other apostle's death?

ANSWERS to these questions will be found in the following chapters. -- Acts xxiv.; Matt. viii.; Acts x.; Mark vi.; Matt. ii., Luke iii., Acts xii. and xxvi.; Acts xxv.; Matt. vii.; Acts ii.; Gen xli. and Dan. v.; Acts xvi.; Mark iii.; Acts xxvii.; 2 Tim. iv.; 2 Pet. i.; John xxi.

-----

*Prayer.*

O GOD, who hast said that it is pleasing to Thee that Thy people should pray for all men, for king and all in authority, hear us when we ask Thee to bless our beloved Queen, and all the members of her royal family. Bless also, we pray Thee, all judges and magistrates in our land, all governors of our colonies, and all that in any way are called to be rulers over our fellow-subjects. Bless all rulers on the earth, emperors, kings, presidents, and make them just and good. Bless all that may be prisoners for conscience' sake. If Thine eye sees them in prison, or brought before the judgment-seat of men, because they love that which is right, help Thou them to be faithful and true, and deliver them from their foes. Pity those who are in prison for their crimes. Lead them to think upon their sins, and to repent. Bring them to Him who saved the thief dying on the cross beside Him. Lord, we thank Thee for the protection of laws in our own and other countries. May the laws of men be more and more made to be just and right, like thine. We thank Thee that if Thy children suffer for good deeds, Thy judgment will put all to rights. Lord, help us to bear in mind that we must all stand at the judgment-seat of Christ.

In view of this may we always be found on the watch, since we know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of man cometh. May we earnestly strive to do the work which God requires of us, that we may hear our great Saviour and Lord at last say to us, Well done, good servants, enter into the joy of your Lord. All we ask is for His sake. *Amen.*

-----

## THE EVENING SERVICE.

ALMIGHTY and gracious Father, Thou art rich in mercy, and infinitely more wise in giving than we are in asking. Grant us now the Spirit of wisdom to guide us, that so we may not fail of receiving because of our asking amiss. Thou knowest what is truly good for us, and that we humbly beseech Thee to bestow, for Jesus' sake. *Amen.*

### HYMN, *or Psalm* xxiii.

DREAD Sov'reign, let my evening song  
Like holy incense rise;  
Assist the offerings of my tongue  
To reach the lofty skies.

Through all the dangers of the day  
Thy hand was still my guard;  
And still to drive my wants away  
Thy mercy stood prepared.

Perpetual blessings from above  
Encompass me around;  
But O how few returns of love  
Hath my Creator found!

Sprinkled afresh with pard'ning blood,  
I lay me down to rest,  
As in the everlasting arms  
Or on my Saviour's breast.

LUKE XXIII. 8-46.

AND when Herod saw Jesus he was exceedingly glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long season, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him. 9. Then he questioned with him in many words; but he answered him nothing. 10. And the chief priests and scribes stood, and vehemently accused him. 11. And Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate. 12. And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together; for before they were at enmity between themselves. 13. And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests, and the rulers, and the people, 14. Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people; and behold, I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him; 15. No, nor yet Herod; for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him. 16. I will therefore chastise him, and release him. 17. (For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast.) 18. And they cried out all at once saying, Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas: 19. (Who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison.) 20. Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them. 21. But they cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. 22. And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him, and

let him go. 23. And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified, and the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed. 24. And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required. 25. And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired; but he delivered Jesus to their will. 26. And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus. 27. And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him. 28. But Jesus, turning unto them, said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. 29. For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. 30. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. 31. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry? 32. And there were also two others, malefactors, led with him to be put to death. 33. And when they were come to the place which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors; one on the right hand, and the other on the left, &c .

## *Prayer.*

O GOD, we thank Thee that unto us hath come this great mercy once again, to hear the blessed invitations of Thy gospel: at the table of our Father's bounty we have received the children's bread. For the cold hearts with which we have heard of Thy mercy, and the hardened pride with which we have hearkened to Thy faithful warnings; for the wandering thought and the rebellious desire that filled our souls when our lips were opened in praise and prayer -- we entreat Thy pardon, O God of all compassion. Thou willest not the death of the sinner; Thou hast no profit in them that go down into the pit; and we now therefore beseech Thee, O God of our salvation, to deliver us and purge away our sins for Thy name's sake.

We render Thee thanks for all the proofs of Thy tender mercy that Thou hast given us. Thou compassest our path and our lying down. By Thy unceasingly fatherly care we have been preserved in peace and in safety through this day. Let us not be forgetful of Thee who hast guided us, and guarded us, and fed us, but help us to look up unto Thee in every hour of every day for present blessings, and for their everlasting fruit in the good of our souls. Help us day by day to cherish gratitude for Thy mercies, that have been bestowed on us the unthankful and the evil; which have

come to us when we looked not for them yea, although our hearts were regardless of Thy love, and our minds were estranged from Thy truth, and our strength was given to the cares and vanities of the present world.

Above all, make us deeply thankful for the gift of Thy Son, through whom thou art reconciling the world unto Thyself, not imputing unto men their trespasses. We are persuaded that God, who spared not His own Son, but delivered him up for us all, will with Him also freely give us all things. O that we could realize Him as Thy best gift unto the children of men, and thank Thee with all our hearts, that the things which even the prophets and wise men of old desired to see and have not seen, and to hear but have not heard them, our eyes have seen and our ears have heard. We know that in Christ Jesus all fulness dwells; and we beseech Thee to put it into our hearts to draw largely on those supplies of grace He is ever ready to impart, so that we may grow up unto Him in all things.

Grant, O Lord, that those who have heard Thy word this day may be doers of it, and may show their faith by their works. Make our native land a habitation of mercy, showing unto the darkened nations of the earth how blessed are the people whose God is the Lord. Prepare for their departure those who are drawing near to death. Have mercy on the fatherless and the widow; preserve all lawful travellers by land and sea; and every where make the



dealings of Thy providence speedily to compass the great ends of Thy grace, in the coming of Thy kingdom of righteousness and peace. To these our prayers send a gracious answer for Jesus' sake. *Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

*Morning.*

**For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.**

And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name.

Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.

Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married.

Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken.

Isa lxii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 12.

*Evening.*

**For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land; a land of brooks of water, of fountains, and depths that spring out of valleys and hills.**

When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which he hath given thee.

Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint;

Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not; that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end.

Deut. viii. 7, 10, 15, 16.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Surely it is meet to be said unto God, I have borne chastisement, I will not offend any more:**

That which I see not, teach thou me; if I have done iniquity, I will do no more.

For thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great.

Look upon mine affliction and my pain, and forgive all my sins.

Depart from evil, and do good; and dwell for evermore.

For the Lord loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever; but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.

Job xxxiv. 31, 32. Ps. xxv. 11, 18. Ps. xxxvii. 27, 28.

*Evening.*

**Thou God seest me.**

There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.

For he will not lay upon man more than right, that he should enter into judgment with God.

He shall break in pieces mighty men without number, and set others in their stead.

When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? and when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? whether it be done against a nation, or against a man only.

Gen. xvi. 13. Job. xxxiv. 21, 22, 23, 24, 29.

## WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**He stayeth his rough wind in the day of the east wind.**

Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight which he hath made crooked?

In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him.

The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.

Every way of a man is right in his own eyes; but the Lord pondereth the hearts.

Isa. xxvii. 8.      Eccles. vii. 13, 14.      Prov. xxi. 1, 2.

*Evening.*

**Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.**

For the living know that they shall die, but the dead know not any thing neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten.

Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun.

Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.

Prov. xxvii. 1.      Eccles. ix. 5, 6.      Num. xxiii. 10.      Ps. cxvi. 15.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!**

For these things I weep: mine eye, mine eye runneth down with water, because the comforter that should relieve my soul is far from me: my children are desolate, because the enemy prevailed.

Zion spreadeth forth her hands, and there is none to comfort her.

But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, he shall testify of me.

Jer. ix. 1. Lam. i. 16, 17. John xv. 26.

*Evening.*

**Arise, cry out in the night; in the beginning of the watches pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord: lift up thy hands toward him.**

For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

Thus saith the Lord, Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy.

They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.

Lam. ii. 19. Ps. xxx. 5. Jer. xxxi. 16. Ps. cxxvi. 5.

## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**Go not forth hastily to strive, lest thou know not what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbour hath put thee to shame.**

Debate thy cause with thy neighbour himself, and discover not a secret to another.

Wisdom strengtheneth the wise more than ten mighty men which are in the city.

For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.

Also take no heed unto all words that are spoken; lest thou hear thy servant curse thee:

For oftentimes also thine own heart knoweth that thou thyself likewise hast cursed others.

Prov. xxv. 8, 9. Eccles. vii. 19, 20, 21, 22.

*Evening.*

**I said I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue; I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me.**

He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding; but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly.

The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.

A wholesome tongue is a tree of life: but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit.

But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

Lie not to one another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds.

Ps. xxxix. 1. Prov. xiv. 29. Prov. xv. 3, 4. Col. iii. 8, 9.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,**

Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.

Whoso keepeth the commandments shall feel no evil thing; and a wise man's heart discerneth both time and judgment.

Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord, till he come and rain righteousness upon you.



The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand:  
repent ye, and believe the gospel.

Eph. v. 15, 16, 17. Eccles. viii. 5. Hos. x. 12. Mark i. 15.

*Evening.*

**These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should  
not be offended.**

They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea the time  
cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth  
God service.

And these things will they do unto you, because they  
have not known the Father, nor me.

But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow  
hath filled your heart.

Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you  
that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not  
come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

John xvi. 1, 2, 3, 6, 7.

# HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

## FORTY-SEVENTH WEEK.

### MORNING WORSHIP.

O LORD, having boldness to enter into Thy holy presence through the blood of Jesus, we implore the aid of Thy Spirit as the Spirit of prayer and supplication. May He help our infirmities, and make intercession for us according to Thy will, that we may worship Thee, the Father of our spirits, in spirit and in truth. *Amen.*

### HYMN, *or Psalm* xliii. 3-5.

ON this day, the first of days,  
God the Father's name we praise;  
Who, creation's Fount and spring,  
Did the world from darkness bring.

On this day th' Eternal Son  
Over death his triumph won;  
On this day the Spirit came  
With his gifts of living flame.

Oh! that fervent love to-day  
May in every heart have sway,  
Teaching us to praise aright  
God the source of life and light.

Father, who didst fashion me  
Image of thyself to be,  
Fill me with thy love divine,  
Let my every thought be thine.

#### JEREMIAH XXV. 1-14.

THE word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, that was the first year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon; 2. The which Jeremiah the prophet spake unto all the people of Judah, and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, 3. From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, even unto this day (that is the three and twentieth year), the word of the Lord hath come unto me, and I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking; but ye have not hearkened. 4. And the Lord hath sent unto you all his servants the prophets, rising early and

sending them; but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear. 5. They said, Turn ye again now every one from his evil way, and from the evil of your doings, and dwell in the land that the Lord hath given unto you and your fathers for ever and ever; 6. And go not after other gods to serve them, and to worship them, and provoke me not to anger with the works of your hands, and I will do you no hurt. 7. Yet ye have not hearkened unto me, saith the Lord; that ye might provoke me to anger with the works of your hands to your own hurt. 8. Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, because ye have not heard my words, 9. Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the Lord, and Nebuchadressar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations. 10. Moreover, I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, and sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle. 11. And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. 12 And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it

perpetual desolations. 13. And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, even all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations. 14. For many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of them also; and I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the works of their own hands.

-----

*Prayer.*

HEARKEN unto the voice of our cry, our King and our God; for unto Thee will we pray. Many and strong are the foes which seek after our souls to destroy them; deliver us, O Lord, from our enemies: we flee unto Thee to hide us. Teach us to do Thy will, for Thou art our God; Thy spirit is good, lead us into the land of uprightness. Quicken us, O Lord, for Thy name's sake; for Thy righteousness' sake, bring our souls out of trouble.

Our iniquities, O Lord, are gone up over our heads, and the cry of our trespass has reached unto the heavens. We cherish no thought that is not mixed with sin, nor do we ever render Thee any service which is wholly pure from self-love. O blot out as a thick cloud all our transgressions,

and as a cloud our sins; for Thou hast redeemed us. We thank Thee that Thy sinless Son was made sin for us; we bless Thee that the Light of the world submitted to darkness in our stead, that the Life of all things died on our behalf, that the Almighty became as weakness, and the King of kings a servant of servants, to redeem our ruined race. At Thy footstool, O Father of mercy, we humbly bow: with no plea but that Christ hath died for our offences and risen again for our justification, we entreat Thy pardon. Deny it not, O God, lest we be counted with those that go down into the pit, and be as men that have no strength, and who are cut off from Thy hand for ever.

The thought of Thy superabounding mercy toward us, notwithstanding all our unworthiness, may well fill our hearts with adoring gratitude and praise. When we were held in hopeless captivity by the law of sin and of death, from which we could do nothing to relieve ourselves, Thou didst bring us out of darkness and the shadow of death, and didst break our bands in sunder. O that we could praise Thee as we ought for Thy goodness, and for Thy wonderful works unto us the children of men. Even when we perverted Thy gifts to the service of our own sinful hearts, and the gratification of every passing thought, Thou, O Lord, didst not withdraw them, but didst bless us still. Humbly and most thankfully do we acknowledge that Thy

ways are not as our ways, nor Thy thoughts as our thoughts.

And now, O Father, we beseech Thee to be with us this day, giving us a child-like faith and trust in Thy blessed grace and guidance, in Thy heavenly counsel, and in Thy mighty protection. Consecrate us all with the blessed influences of Thy Holy Spirit, causing us to rejoice in the gladness of Thy people, and to glory with Thine inheritance. Make the gospel of Thy grace to come into our souls with the demonstration of Thy Spirit and with power. O send forth Thy light and Thy truth everywhere among the assemblies of Thy people, to gladden and to guide them; and among those who forsake Thy sanctuary and profane Thy holy day, to turn them from the error of their ways, unto Thy worship and service. Make all those who bear Thy Son's name to be living epistles, testifying by lives of charity and welldoing that they have passed from death unto life, and therefore, love the brethren.

These, and all our prayers, we offer in and through Him who has taught us to say, Our Father, &c. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O LORD, seeing that our life is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away; so teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom, and may be found of Christ in peace, without spot, and blameless, at His glorious appearing to judge the world. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* lxxi. 15-18.

IN vain the erring world enquires  
For some substantial good;  
While earth confines their low desires,  
They live on airy food.

Illusive dreams of happiness  
Their eager thoughts employ:  
They wake, convinced their boasted bliss  
Is visionary joy.

Not all the good which earth bestows



Can fill the craving mind;  
Its highest joys have mingled woes,  
And leave a sting behind.

Grant, O my God, this one request --  
O be thy love alone  
My ample portion ! -- here I rest,  
For heaven is in the boon.

#### ECCLESIASTES XII. 1-7.

**R**EMEMBER now thy Creator in the days of thy youth,  
while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when  
thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them; 2. While the  
sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened,  
nor the clouds return after the rain: 3. In the day when the  
keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall  
bow themselves, and the grinders cease, because they are  
few, and those that look out at the windows be darkened; 4.  
And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound  
of the grinding is low; and he shall rise up at the voice of a  
bird; and all the daughters of musick shall be brought low:  
5. Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and  
fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish,  
and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail;

because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets: 6. Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern: 7. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

## 2 PETER III.

THIS second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: 2. That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour: 3. Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, 4. And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. 5. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: 6. Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: 7. But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgement and

perdition of ungodly men. 8. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. 10. But the day of the Lord shall come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up. 11. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness; 12. Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? 13. Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. 14. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless: 15. And account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you: 16. As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things: in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures,

unto their own destruction. 17. Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye now these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness; 18. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. *Amen.*

-----

## SERMON XLVII.

*(Addressed specially to the Young.)*

“AND THE KING SAID UNTO BARZILLAI, COME THOU OVER WITH ME, AND I WILL FEED THEE WITH ME AT JERUSALEM. AND BARZILLAI SAID UNTO THE KING, HOW LONG HAVE I TO LIVE, THAT I SHOULD GO UP WITH THE KING UNTO JERUSALEM? I AM THIS DAY FOURSORE YEARS OLD; AND CAN I DISCERN BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL? CAN THY SERVANT TASTE WHAT I EAT OR WHAT I DRINK? CAN I HEAR ANY MORE THE VOICE OF SINGING MEN AND SINGING WOMEN? . . . LET THY SERVANT, I PRAY THEE, TURN BACK AGAIN, THAT I MAY DIE IN MINE OWN CITY, AND BE BURIED BY THE GRAVE OF MY FATHER AND OF MY MOTHER.” -- 2 Sam. xix. 33-37.

ONE word of explanation is all that is necessary, in order to feel the full force and beauty of this little story. King

David, in the rebellion of his beloved and treacherous Absalom, has been driven from the monarchy, his crown is in peril, a price is set upon his head; he crosses the Jordan into the wild desert-like regions on the other side, and, whilst old friends are dropping away from him in their haste to worship the rising sun, two or three of the more simple loyal chieftains of that half-barbarous country -- Barzillai among them -- bring to him, in the time of his necessity, seasonable supplies for himself and his men. And then, when the tide turns, and poor Absalom is hung up there in the oak tree by the hair; and everybody is flocking back, fawning at the feet of the man they had been cursing -- his stanch old friend, Barzillai, comes out to meet him again on his triumphant return, and attends him a little way across Jordan, till he fairly stands on the soil of his recovered kingdom. The king offers to carry the aged chief to court, and bring him to honour there. But the old man answers in the language we have selected for our text. Now, I take these words for the sake of the picture of old age which they give us. Clearness and quickness of intellect are gone; all taste for the pleasures and delights of sense is gone; ambition is dead; capacity for change is departed. What is left? The old man lives in the past and in the future. The early child-love for the father and mother, who hung over his cradle eighty years ago, remains fresh. He cannot "hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women;" but

he can hear, stealing through almost a century, the old tones, thin and ghost-like, of the dear ones whom he first learned to love. The furthest past is fresh and vivid, and in memory of it is half his life. Also he looks forward familiarly and calmly to the very near end, and thinks much of death. That thought keeps house with him now, and is nearer to him than the world of living men is. Thus, one half of his life is memory, and the other half is hope; and all his hopes are now reduced and simplified to one -- the hope to die, and then to be laid down and go to sleep again beside his father and mother. And so he returns to his city, and passes out of our sight.

I address young people chiefly, in this sermon: Why should I speak to you about old age? It is because some of you will come to that. Some of you, perhaps, will have to die young; the most of you will come to middle age and maturity; and to some of you silver hairs will be granted, and you may see your children's children. And what I want to put before you now is the lesson of what life -- if life be spared -- is sure to do to you; that upon these certainties I may build the old, old appeal, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them."

I. In the first place, then, looking at this picture of old age, we gather this simple thought: *Life as it goes on, is*

*sure to rob us gradually of our interest in earthly things.*

“Can I discern between good and evil any more?” says the old man. That does not refer to conscience but you will find that, in the Old Testament generally, the phrase, “discerning between good and evil,” applies rather to what we should call judgment or understanding. A gradual dimness or feebleness, or at least a want of mobility and elasticity, has come over the mind of the old man; can thy servant taste what I eat or what I drink?” All the things that please the senses have lost their power of delighting, if not altogether, yet to a great extent. And more than that -- ambition is deadening too. “What do I care to go up to Jerusalem, to go even to court? The hills of Gilead are better for me than that; I will stop where I am!” Sixty years ago he would have been glad to have the offer, but he has found out that in much wisdom is much sorrow; he has found out that “the world passeth away and the lust thereof;” and he has found out that ambition and advancement are but hollow things after all. And so, with his dim old eyes, he looks past them and through them; and says, Let me alone; I don’t care about those things any more!”

Now, I do not mean to say that that is what all people come to; but this certainly is true -- you will never be so enthusiastic again as you are in your youth; you will never feel as if the world was so full of a boundless treasury of

joys and delights, as you do in the budding freshness of your early days. There is a glory in everything to the young man's and to the young woman's eye, not so much belonging to the objects themselves, as reflected on them from the unworn buoyant heart that opens to receive the new experiences of unfolding life. You have but stepped across the threshold into life. Like a child waking from sleep, and running into some fair garden, the first moment is all bright and beautiful to you. You have your sorrows, I well know, and your times of dark and deep despair, which, perhaps, are as sad and dark as those of the more experienced in the vanities of this life. But, on the whole, thank God! all young things are happy and lithe in their early life, and you amongst the rest.

I speak here, then (following the guidance of the passage before us), mainly to three classes. I make my appeal, first, to those of you, who, stung by a true and lofty Ambition, are seeking to gain wisdom and knowledge -- to intermeddle with all truth, to know the causes and reasons of things, and to order, in your thoughts, this confused and chaotic world that lies all round about you, into something like a system and a whole. All honour to you for it. But young man, thinker, student, reader, to whom truth is the loftiest word, wisdom the grandest thought, whose spirit is yearning "to follow knowledge like a sinking star, beyond the furthest bounds of human thought," -- let me give you a



caution. The well of truth is not a fountain. Though it is the divinest, perhaps, of created occupations, all but one excepted, to learn and to think, and ever to be piecing together that which we know not by that which we do know -- that is not enough for you. You will tire of it.

Knowledge, wisdom, has its pains and its limitations. As the days creep on, you will find that life is something more than a library; that there is something else to be done in the world than to *know*; that a man with a brain and nothing else is a monster; and that precious sympathies, and human loves, and large duties, are all neglected and tossed aside, when once the overmastering, unbridled diseased love of knowledge has marked you for its own. Ah! who knows in how many ways it is true, "the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God?" Learn, study, think, task your mind on knotty and difficult subjects; but, oh! remember to purify your consciences; remember this fact -- you are a sinner, and a wise sinner may be none the less a lost sinner after all! "With all thy getting, get understanding;" and above all, remember that a time will come -- here, perhaps -- yonder, certainly -- when "tongues shall cease, knowledge shall pass away," favourite subjects will begin to seem "flat, stale, and unprofitable;" and the wise man, who is nothing more, will wake up to understand that, with all his wisdom, he is a fool. "Can thy servant discern any more between good and evil?"

Then, again, there is another class to whom these words point an appeal. I speak to some, who, in the flush of their early days, and the buoyancy of the strong new life that is in them, feel as if *the delights that can be felt, and tasted, and handled*, were the grand things that they had come to inherit. And my appeal to you, dear friends, is still more emphatic, I am not speaking now only to persons who, in the pursuit of sensuous pleasure, step across the golden limit of morality and of duty, and plunge themselves into the seething pool of sin. There will be a word to say to them presently. But I appeal, rather, to the far wider class, to whom life in its outward forms, the delights of life, are, thus far, sufficing. And, my friend, if God, in his grace and mercy, keep you in this world for a few more years, when the sinews begin to get relaxed, and the palate insensible, and the hand hard and horny and rheum and mist begin to creep over the eyes, and the brain works sluggishly, and all the physical powers show tokens of giving out, what will you have of it all? “He that soweth to the flesh shall, of the flesh, reap corruption.” There is no evading that law. You cannot go on living in sensuous delights for ever. Excess in these soon tells on the physical frame. They soon pall on the jaded sense, which needs a stronger stimulus each time, and each time receives a less gratification: and if nothing else will check you, days are coming “when there will be no more pleasure in them.” Ay, and the faster you gallop, the

sooner you will come to that point! The author who made it his business in England to sublimate and spiritualize voluptuousness, said, when he was about thirty, “Man delights me not, nor woman neither.” It did not take *him* eighty years to come to Barzillai’s place; he could not “taste what he ate or drank,” and “the voice of singing men and singing women” was no delight to the jaded, palled senses of the wild voluptuary. Take care!

Lastly, in this part of my subject, here is an appeal pointed to you who are making your object in life *self-advancement*. The glittering prize looks wonderfully less glittering when you come to stand with one foot groping out from the solid land of life into the misty sea of death. Four-score years taught this man, that it was not worth while to be at the trouble of going to Jerusalem, for all that a court could give. And it might be as well for you and for all of us, to learn that lesson before experience, for it would save us many a bitter disenchantment.

The lesson, then, of the whole is just this: do not sell your souls to objects which in their true nature are transient; but as you have got to live for ever, take an everlasting portion for our portion, and make an everlasting Friend for your friend. Make Christ your love, your joy, your trust. Go to Him, young man, young woman, little child, old man, and all, go to Him with our heart in your hand, and trust Him for this mercy, and rely upon his

sacrifice for your forgiveness, and upon his grace for our salvation and then, “when heart fails,” and no longer is the understanding quick to discern between good and evil, it shall be wise “to know the Lord;” and when flesh fails, and sense is no longer a minister of delight, God will be the strength of your heart, and your portion for ever more.

II. There is another feature of old age which comes out here, upon which we may also found a similar lesson: *Life will certainly rob you of the power of change.* This poor old man felt that he could not go up to Jerusalem. He is too old to be transplanted. He had been bred upon the mountain side, and brought up amongst his flocks; and he could not fit into a court. But,” says he, “there is my boy, ‘behold thy servant Chimham; let him go over with my lord the king, and do to him what shall seem good unto thee.’” The lad is young enough to be moulded; take him with you, and put the kindness that you want to do to the father upon the son’s head; because I am too old to change.”

Ay, that is a sad solemn truth for many a man -- too old to change! God be thanked, there is no point on this side of death where the great change of all is absolutely impossible. But yet whilst this *is* true, and whilst all life is the region within which we may accept the gospel, yet it is also true that, if you let your early days pass also true that, if you let your early days pass by without giving your heart to Christ, you are running a terrible risk, and it certainly

will be an infinitely harder thing for you to come back to Him in your maturer age. When the clay is soft, touch it with a straw, and the mark will remain; but when it is burned into brick, hammer it with iron and you will only break it. You are at the time of life when habits are made. That strange and awful power of habit may become your deadliest enemy, or your best friend. You may get into the habit of wrong-doing, and then it clings to you like a cleaving, leprous curse; or you may make custom an ally of all goodness, and habit the guardian shield around all righteousness and holiness and faith. You are making your characters every moment. You are not only living in these young days of yours, but you are settling how you are going to live in all the time that comes after.

You say to yourself, perhaps, "I'll have my fling; I'll sow my wild oats; I'll wait a little while; time enough yet; and then when I get steady and grave, and middle-aged, I'll begin to think about being a Christian!" Perhaps you will; I do not say you will not, but I am quite sure of this, that you will find it a dreadfully harder task. Whilst you delay, the forming-time of your life is slipping away. Whilst you delay, you are getting into habits of evil, and of rejecting God's love. Whilst you delay, you are hardening your conscience. Whilst you delay, you are weakening the power of the gospel upon you. You are *loading the dice*, so as to make it a million chances to one against your ever changing.

You may, you may, but in all probability you will not. The experience of a good many years now has taught me this, that for one man that truly turns to God after he is five and twenty or thirty years old, there are a hundred that intended to do it when they were children, and put it off for a little while, and let the time slip, and at last -- at last -- fell into the desperate thought, "The time is gone! I'm too old to change now." I have little hope that middle-aged men who are not Christians will ever become so; and I turn to you, dear young friends, plastic and flexible, who can shape habits, who are making your characters, who have not the clog of years of rejection on your feet, with the entreaty, "Will you not from this time say, "My Father, thou art the guide of my youth."

III. Once more, *Life will certainly deepen early memories*. It is very beautiful to see how this old man, who was living, as we said, half in the future, was living the other half in the early childish past.

We have all seen instances of the same sort, how, when people begin to lose the power of remembrance, the thing that goes out of their memories last, is the thing that was put in their first. When all the strife and sorrow of middle age are gone, and when all the turbulence of youth is forgotten, the childish days remain; and as with Barzillai, the father's and mother's faces are found imprinted, never to be erased, on the heart of the grey-headed child. I

remember once seeing an old Christian man dying, who forgot all the years of activity (he had been a preacher of the gospel) and of faithful service, forgot all the sorrows and disappointments of his poverty-pinched life, and remembered only his boyish days, and babbled on his death-bed the old names that he had learned at his mother's knee. The eastern sky often catches on its tints a pale rose tint from the setting sun, whilst all the upper heavens are colourless and dull. Just so, life at the end looks toward the beginning, and we remember best our youthful days. Well, then, do not lay up in your hearts now things that will torture you then. Young men in our great commercial cities! tempted by companions, tempted by loneliness, tempted to prove your manhood and liberty by indulging in forbidden things, do not you do what would rack your fathers' and mothers' hearts if it were told at home! If you do, it will be the bitterest, blackest memory that you have (should you ever come to be an old man and a father yourself), that you brought the silver hairs of your father, and the deep tenderness of a mother's heart, with a burden of added sorrow, to their grave.

Oh! there are many of us, I am sure, who can remember things in our childish past that, a hundred times since, we would have given the world that we had not done, when we think of the loving dead faces to which we once brought tears. Children! children of many prayers, children

of Christian parents, cast upon the world now, and shaping your course, lay this to heart, and resolve that you will not heap upon your souls memories of profligacy, memories of wickedness, memories of godlessness, memories of disobedience, that will burn with baleful light when many other things are forgotten in your aging hearts!

And more than that, let Christ come to you now with his promises of peace and of pardon, and beginning to be His now, believing in His love and resting in His mighty work, lay up for yourselves the treasure of a youth which, with all its imperfections and with all its sins, was yet a youth of belief in the Lord Jesus Christ; that when the days come in which the present is nothing, and memory is half your being, you may remember then a long course of humble dependence upon God, and be able to say in the retrospect of it all, "I, thy servant, feared God from my youth."

IV. Last of all, *Life will more and more confine our hopes and vision to the grave.* This man's hopes are all, as I said, dwindled down into one -- the hope to die, and be laid in the burial place of his father and mother. Quietly familiar with the end, he waited for it patiently. Will you, will you, dear young friends, take that blessed Saviour for your Saviour; that if God spare your lives to those quiet days, at the end of a long course you, with like tranquillity -- as a traveller that has packed his goods and got his cloak on, and has nothing to do but to walk up and down the dock-side till



the ship is ready -- may be able to feel, "I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait," and I am ready to go when He will. There is nothing in the whole world more beautiful than the calm tranquillity of an aged Christian waiting till his change come. Whether the understanding be bright to the end or clouded and darkened, whether the flesh and sense fail or keep strong, it does not matter much. And what solemn sweet beauty there is in the calm close of such a life which goes down so slowly, like the lingering midsummer sun living in softened light in the western heaven, out of which it has set, long after it has risen in the ampler sky of the other world!

Let Jesus guide you, and it will be all well. Then, like some river that rises up among the hills, and comes at first leaping and sparkling down the valley sides, infantine in its thin rill, and jubilant in its quick march; and then gradually, as it gets into the plain, moving more slowly and more sedately, broader and deeper and calmer, and doing work amongst the "haunts of men," and carrying merchandise on its hospitable bosom, and gliding on at last, never so calm as when it is just opening into the sea, and blending its waters with the shoreless ocean; so our life will roll on: and though it may lose much of its early brightness, and pass through man scenes of hard toil, will be come deeper and worthier as it becomes calmer and slower, and will then be fairest when the rolling of the great waters into which it is soon to flow

begins to be heard; and then, with a little sock and jar, you will mingle with the broad ocean, and dwell in God for evermore! Then shaking off the oppression of weariness, and age, and weakness, and decay, you the first born of heaven and the youngest angel before the throne, will renew your youth, and enter upon a being in which the buoyancy and novelty and irrepressible spring, and endless hope of early days, shall more than come back to you again. The lesson of lessons is, “Fear God and keep His commandments; for this is the whole of man.” “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,” and if you die young you will be ripe enough for heaven, and if you linger, till you are old you will pass into His presence, and be young again there for ever.

-- ALEXANDER MACLAREN, B.A.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

### THROUGH WHAT PERILS PAUL PASSED ON HIS WAY TO ROME.

AT the time when it had been resolved to send Paul to the emperor in Rome, there came a merchant-ship into the harbour of Caesarea, belonging to the town of Adramyttium. As this vessel was to sail along the coast of Asia, it was thought to offer a good opportunity for sending the apostle so far on his journey. So a centurion, with soldiers under his command, was directed to take charge of Paul and his companions, along with other prisoners; and to go on board, and sail to some convenient port where another ship might be met with on her way to Italy. A short time brought them to Myra, and there a corn ship was found that had come from Egypt, laden with grain, and was going on to Rome. The centurion, accordingly, put Paul and the rest aboard this vessel, and she proceeded on her voyage.

At first the progress of the ship was very slow, the wind blowing from the west and keeping it back. At length, by yielding to its force, and taking a round-about course, the sailors managed to bring their vessel to a place on the south side of the island of Crete, where they had to stay so long

that the time for safe sailing had passed for that year. Here it was that Paul warned the captain of the ship and others on board, that if they put to sea again, the voyage would be very dangerous. But the harbour at Fair Havens, where the ship now was, was not a convenient place to be all winter in; and the shipmaster and the owner of the vessel were both resolved to try and get to another port in Crete further to the west. So one day when a soft south wind was blowing, they thought a favourable time for accomplishing their purpose had come, and they gave orders to set sail. Away they sped, lightly and happily at first, keeping near to the coast, and hoping soon to reach the safe harbour where they could spend the winter. But though it was not afar off, they were not then to see it. For all of a sudden, a strong wind, blowing quite fiercely, came down from the land, and struck the ship till it reeled in the blast. All the sailors could do was vain, to enable the vessel to make head-way in the storm; and they had just to let her drive before the tempest. Away the ship went like a helpless thing, and the seamen began to think that she would be driven ere long into a very dangerous part of the sea, known as the Quicksands. They set themselves in every way they could to lessen their peril. They got into the boat with hard work, and passed ropes round the body of the ship, girding it firmly, to make it stronger. They afterwards put the sails so, that they could let the ship lie to. Then they began to

lighten it by heaving a number of things out into the sea; for valuable as property was, it was nothing to hundreds of lives. After a day or two they lightened it yet more, by throwing overboard the spare tackling and gear. All this while the wind blew as fiercely as ever, and continued to do so day after day. The whole crew, with passengers and soldiers, were at length in despair. They had not seen sun, or moon, or star for many days, and the storm had never abated, while the ship had been drifting away to the west, they could not tell how far. They had not the least hope now of being saved, and had not heart enough even to take food.

But just when they were all in this state, Paul had one night a visit from an angel, sent by God to tell him that he need have no fear, for he was to stand before Caesar, and that for his sake God would spare also all the lives on board. No doubt Paul had prayed for God's help, and for the two hundred and seventy-six persons that were in all the ship and now God grants him his desire. Next morning Paul told his vision to the people, and assured them that not a man of them would be drowned. He said he quite believed God that it would be as he had said: the ship would be lost, and they would be cast on an island, but not one life would perish.

The sailors were a good deal cheered by what Paul had said no doubt; but the storm still blew. At last, on the fourteenth night of the hurricane, they thought they must

be coming near land. So, having found that it was really so, by sounding the depth of the sea, and seeing that it was growing less, they cast four anchors out of the ship, and began to wait anxiously for the light of day. At this time the seamen behaved ill. They lowered the boat, and pretending to be preparing for casting additional anchors, they were going to get into the boat and leave the ship. But Paul told the Roman officer about their preparations, and said that, unless they continued on board, the rest would perish. On that the centurion ordered the soldiers to cut the ropes, and the boat fell into the sea. At length the morning dawned, and Paul standing forth before the whole company took some food; and giving thanks to God, he began to eat in their presence entreating them to do the same. His words and example put heart into them, and they took some food also, and began to be cheerful and in good hope. When their meal was ended, the daylight was now clear, and they set themselves to run the ship into a little opening in the land, where they could see a gently sloping beach, hoping that it might go aground there. So they threw the cargo of wheat into the sea, to make the vessel as light as possible; then raised the anchors, and spread the mainsail, and untied the helm, and made for the shore. They did not succeed, however, in their aim. Before they could reach the little creek, the ship went aground at a point where two seas met; and though the fore part stuck fast, the under part was

broken to pieces. But the centurion, refusing for Paul's sake to kill the prisoners, took command, and ordered those who could swim to throw themselves into the sea, and make for land, Afterwards, by the use of boards and other fragments of the ship, those who could not swim were floated safe to shore, and as Paul had said, not one of all the crew or passengers was lost.

The island on the shore of which the shipwrecked company were now standing under heavy rain, they knew now to be called Melita. It is generally believed to be the same as modern Malta; and the very place where the shipwreck took place may be said to be well known. The people on the island were very kind to Paul and the rest. They gathered a large bundle of firewood, and made a huge fire, and asked them all to come near. It was when this was being done that a striking circumstance happened. A venomous viper had been gathered along with the sticks from the woods. When the fire began to burn, and the creature felt the heat, it darted out, and fastened on Paul's bare hand, as he stood near warming himself. The people seeing this, and knowing that the snake was a poisonous one, and observing that Paul was a prisoner, said to themselves, This man is no doubt a murderer; he has escaped the sea, but the gods are pursuing him, and have sent the viper to kill him. Meanwhile, Paul shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm. When the people saw

that after a time he stood there quite well, without a trace of hurt about him, they changed their minds, and said he was a god. We need not doubt, however, that the good apostle would teach them that he was just a man like themselves, and would preach Christ to them. Paul staid for three months at Malta, and performed a great many miracles of healing; and was so much liked by the people, that when he and his companions left in another ship to go to Italy, they quite loaded them with presents. The voyage was safely accomplished, and then a short journey by land brought Paul to Rome. There he was kept a prisoner; staying, however, in his own hired house, watched by a soldier, for two years, having numerous opportunities of preaching the gospel. He was set free after appearing before the emperor, and made journeys to tell men about Jesus. At last, however, he was made prisoner in Rome again, brought before Nero a second time, and condemned to die. And one day they took him from his dungeon out through the city gates, and an executioner beheaded him. His soul went to Jesus, whom he had so loved and served. He had fought a good fight; he had finished his course; he had kept the faith; and he was now called home to receive his crown.

-----

## QUESTIONS FROM THE BIBLE STORY.



1. From what harbour did a merchant-ship once sail to be caught in a storm which in the end became calm in a moment?

2. Where do we read of wind sweeping down upon an inland sea, from the hills round about it, and raising the water into great waves that nearly sunk a boat?

3. In what psalm have we a description of a storm at sea, with the rolling waves and staggering sailors?

4. When was there a great famine which a prophet foretold would be followed in a day by great plenty?

5. Was this the only time that Paul suffered ship-wreck?

6. What king of Judah was it that sent ships to sea to bring gold from Ophir, but they never reached the place?

7. Where is it said that God blew with his winds, and many persons perished in the waters of the sea?

8. Who was it that was carried from sea to shore by a strong swimmer?

9. What special miracle do we read of as performed by Paul while he was staying in Malta?

10. What promise of Christ was literally fulfilled by the incident of Paul's being bitten by the serpent, without any harm following?

ANSWERS to the foregoing may be found by consulting the following chapters. -- Jonah i.; Matt. viii.; Ps. cvii.; 2 Kings vii.; 2 Cor. xi.; 1 Kings xxii.; Ex. xv.; Jonah ii.; Acts xxviii.; Mark xvi.

-----

*Prayer.*

O LORD, Thou hast made heaven and earth, and sea, and all that is in them. Thou art the Lord of winds and waves, sending forth storms and hushing them to calm again according to Thy will. Thou seest at the very moment all the ships that are at sea, and all the dangers to which any of them may be exposed. O God, bless all sailors that brave the perils of the deep. Teach them to see Thee in the wondrous things they meet with. In storms may they trust Thee, and pray to Thee, and do Thou graciously hear them, and preserve their lives. O God, we pray that wherever ship-wrecked persons may be cast, they may receive kindness and help. May we be preserved from the dangers which encompass us on land, and ever feel truly thankful for the fatherly care with which Thou watchest over us day by day. Amid all perils may we seek to Thee for safety; under all trials may we find in Thee help and comfort. Under the covert of Thy wings do Thou hide us, so shall we ever be in security and peace. May we, who, wherever we live, are

like people on a voyage, be all brought safely at last into the harbour of Thy love in heaven. This we ask in the name of our Lord Jesus, whose voice once calmed a storm, whose steps were once on the billowy waters, and whose word the winds and seas still obey. To Him be glory for ever. *Amen.*

-----

## THE EVENING SERVICE

FATHER of mercies, let our prayer come up before Thee as incense, and the lifting up of our hands as the evening sacrifice. Thou knowest our wants; give, O Lord, grace and glory, and withhold no good thing from us: for this our prayer we present in the name of Him whom Thou hearest always. *Amen.*

### HYMN, *or Psalm* xxiii.

O GOD, unseen yet ever near,  
Thy presence may we feel;  
And, thus inspired with holy fear,  
Before thine altar kneel.

Here may thy faithful people know  
The blessings of thy love,  
The streams that through the desert flow,  
The manna from above.

We come, obedient to thy word,  
To feast on heavenly food;  
Our meat, the body of the Lord,  
Our drink, his precious blood.

Thus may we all thy words obey,  
For we, O God, are thine;  
And go rejoicing on our way,  
Renewed with strength divine.

#### JOHN XIX. 31-42.

THE Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, on the sabbath-day (for that sabbath-day was an high day), besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. 32. Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. 33. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: 34. But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came thereout blood and water. 35. And he that saw it bear record, and his record is true; and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. 36. For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. 37. And again another

scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.

38. And after this, Joseph of Arimethea (being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews), besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus.

39. And there came also Nicodemus (which at the first came to Jesus by night), and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. 40. Then took they

the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. 41. Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid.

42. There laid they Jesus therefore, because of the Jews' preparation-day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.

## I CORINTHIANS XV. 1-20

**MOREOVER**, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; 2. By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain: 3. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4. And that he was buried, and

that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures; 5. And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: 6. After that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. 7. After that he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. 8. And last of all he was seen of me also, as one born out of due time. 9. For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain: but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. 11. Therefore, whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed, &c.

### *Prayer.*

O GOD, humbly and reverently we again come into Thy presence, beseeching Thee to bless us, and we shall be blessed. Give us a firm and stable faith in Him who is the way unto the Father. May we trust him with all our confidence, and love Him with all our hearts; and seeing that he hath bought us so that we are not our own, may we regard all our time below as too short to show our gratitude

by a conversation becoming the gospel. Amid all our goings out and in, may we ever remember that we are strangers and pilgrims here, and so be looking and waiting for a better, even a heavenly country. May we be found upon our watchtower until our Master comes; and seeing that we know not whether He shall come at evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or in the morning, may we so watch and pray, that whensoever he cometh He may not find us sleeping.

O God, who knowest our infirmities, we beseech Thee to grant us such a portion of the good things of this life as may be best fitted to prepare our immortal souls for heaven. We ask of Thee neither poverty nor riches, but a new heart and a right spirit. Suffer us not to be elated to pride by prosperity, nor cast down to despair by adversity. Keep every one of us from the shame of the ungodly and the doom of the scorner, and the peril of unrepented sin, and from all that defileth and maketh a lie. Dispose us unto humility, faith, and fervency; unto purity of motive and singleness of purpose; unto charity and brotherly-kindness and deeds of love to the brethren for Christ's sake; yea, whatsoever things are pure and honest and lovely and of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, let us think on these things.

May the services of the sabbath be abundantly blessed unto us, and unto all who have been engaged in them. May

those who are weakened by doubt do Thy will, and so learn that Christ's doctrine is of God. Confirm in the truth all those who are halting between two opinions; and enable all Thy people to show by their holy example that, though they are in the world, they are not of it. Extend the kingdom of Thy Son, until from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof Thy name shall be great among the Gentiles. Unite in the fellowship of charity and good works all branches of Thy church in our land. Weaken the influence of those which hinder the progress of Thy cause, and greatly prosper those whose prosperity causeth Thy kingdom to come. May all iniquity, as ashamed, hide its head, and truth and righteousness and peace prevail to the uttermost ends of the earth.

And now, O God, we commend all who are this house, and all our dear friends and kindred, unto Thy holy and merciful care. Through the night defend us from all danger, and after a peaceful and refreshing sleep, grant that we may awake in the morning prepared for all Thou hast prepared for us. These our humble prayers we beseech Thee to hear, for Christ's sake, unto whom be glory for ever. *Amen.*

-----



## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

*Morning.*

**The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever.**

Then one of them, a lawyer, asked, tempting him and saying,

Master, which is the greatest commandment in the law?

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

This is the first and great commandment.

And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Ps. cxi. 10.      Matt. xxii. 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40.

*Evening.*

**I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.**

Let, I pray thee, thy merciful kindness be for my comfort, according to thy word unto thy servant.

Let thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live: for thy law is my delight.

My soul fainteth for thy salvation: but I hope in thy word.

Mine eyes fail for thy word, saying, When wilt thou comfort me?

For I am become like a bottle in the smoke: yet do I not forget thy statutes.

Quicken me after thy loving-kindness; so shall I keep the testimony of thy mouth.

Ps. cxix. 75, 76, 77, 81, 82, 83, 88.

## **TUESDAY.**

*Morning.*

**Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord.**

And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee; and thou shalt know that the Lord of the hosts hath sent me unto thee.

And the Lord shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again.

Be silent O all flesh, before the Lord, for he is raised up out of his holy habitation.

Zech. ii. 10, 11, 12, 13.

*Evening.*

**Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her.**

And I will give her the vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope: and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt.

And it shall be at that day, saith the Lord, that thou shalt call me Ishi, and thou shalt call me no more Baali.

And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgement, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies.

Hos. ii. 14, 15, 16, 19.

## WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded or the witness of Jesus, and for**

**the word of God; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.**

And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works.

And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

Rev. xx. 4, 13, 14.

*Evening.*

**And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband;**

Having the glory of God; and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper-stone, clear as crystal.

And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

Rev. xxi. 2, 11, 23, 24.

**THURSDAY.**

*Morning.*

**The soul that sinneth it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.**

Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.

Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions which he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die.

O house of Israel, are not my ways equal?

Ezek. xviii. 20, 27, 28, 29.

*Evening.*

**But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.**

When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die.

Ezek. xviii. 24, 26.

## FRIDAY.

### *Morning.*

**Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil-concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.**

For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

Adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

Col. iii 5. Rom. viii. 13. 1 John iii. 3. Tit. ii. 10.

### *Evening.*

**Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.**

For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on

their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

2 Cor v. 20, 21. 1 Pet. iv. 14.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.**

For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble:

Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

If any man's work abide which he hath built there-upon, he shall receive a reward.

1 Tim. vi. 19. 1 Cor. iii. 11, 12, 13, 14.

*Evening.*

**Fear not; for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west.**

I, even I, am he that comforteth you.

Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.

And the Lord shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem.

Isa. xliii. 5. Isa. li. 12. Isa. lv. 2, 3. Zech. i. 17.

-----



# HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

## FORTY-EIGHTH WEEK.

### MORNING WORSHIP.

O GOD, who hast taught us that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us, increase and multiply upon us Thy mercy, that Thou being our ruler and guide, we may so pass through things temporal, that we finally lose not the things eternal. Grant this, O heavenly Father, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, or *Psalm xxxi.* 1-5.

I'M not ashamed to own my Lord,  
Or to defend his cause;  
Maintain the honour of his word,  
The glory of his cross.

Jesus, my God, I know his name,  
His name is all my trust;

Nor will He put my soul to shame,  
Nor let my hope be lost.

Firm as his throne his promise stands,  
And He can well secure  
What I've committed to his hands  
Till the decisive hour.

Then will He own my worthless name  
Before his Father's face;  
And in the new Jerusalem  
Appoint my soul a place.

### ACTS XXVI. 1-23.

THEN Agrippa said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to speak for thyself. Then Paul stretched forth the hand, and answered for himself: 2. I think myself happy, King Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews; 3. Especially because I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews; 5. Which knew me from the beginning, (if they would testify,) that after the most straitest sect of our religion, I lived a

Pharisee. 6. And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: 7. Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come: for which hope's sake, King Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. 8. Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead? 9. I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. 10. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. 11. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and, being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities. 12. Whereupon, as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priest, 13. At mid-day, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. 14. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. 15. And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest. 16. But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast

seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; 17. Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, 18. To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. 19. Whereupon, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: 20. But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and to God, and do works meet for repentance. 21. For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me. 22. Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: 23. That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.

-----

## *Prayer.*

O LORD, another of our earthly days is far spent, and the shadows of evening gather on our path. Soon the night cometh wherein no man can work. The brightness of youth, the vigour of manhood, the lingering strength of age will soon be gone. When a few years are come, we shall go the way whence we shall not return.

Merciful God, as in Thy righteousness Thou hast appointed unto all men once to die, and after death the judgment, bestow upon us that deep repentance and godly fear whereby we shall be prepared to meet Thee in peace. We confess that we are utterly without merit or righteousness of our own. Our days are passed away in Thy wrath; and wert Thou to mark iniquity, O Lord, who should stand? We look for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. In Him may we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. May we say, each one, from the heart, in the exercise of a lively faith, “Surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength;” and thus may the sins of a lifetime be covered from Thy sight, and our transgressions be removed from us as far as the east is from the west.

O Lord, Thou callest us by the rapid flight of our days to redeem the time, and to give all diligence to make our

calling and our election sure. How many of our companions have fallen in the wilderness! How are their bones scattered about the grave's mouth, as when one cutteth and cleaveth wood upon the earth! Soon it shall be said to all of us, "Arise and depart, for this is not your rest;" "Give an account of thy stewardship, for thou mayest be no longer steward." Grant, O merciful Father, that instructed by the dispensations of Thy providence, and awake to the voice of Thy Spirit, we may prepare to meet our God. Forbid that so much as one of us should delay repentance to a more convenient season, or be overtaken by the final day unawares! O Thou God of the families of the earth, bless this family with the richest blessings of Thy grace. Uphold us in the slippery paths of youth; comfort us in the decays of age; deliver us in the day of trouble; save us in the hour of death! We have no hope but in Thee; and of this one thing we are confident, that He which hath begun a good work in us will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ! Then shall our sins and our dangers alike end, the burdens of earth be exchanged for the joys of heaven, and the pains and infirmities of this corruptible body give place to incorruption and immortality! Grant us thus, O merciful Father, a part and a lot with Thy redeemed in the day of Christ's appearing; and may our light affliction, which is but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. *Amen.*

---

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O LORD, we acknowledge the depravity inherent in our nature through the fall of our first parents, and that with the full consent of our own minds we have committed unnumbered sins, which justly expose us to everlasting condemnation. Give us thankfully to accept the remedy Thou hast provided, and to remember the obligation it imposes on us to maintain good works. Hear us, for Jesus' sake. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* li. 5-10.

GOD of all grace, we come to Thee,  
With broken contrite hearts;  
Give what thine eyes delight to see--  
Truth in the inward parts:

Give deep humility; the sense  
Of godly sorrow give;  
A strong, desiring confidence  
To hear thy voice and live:

Faith in the holy Sacrifice  
That can for sin atone;  
To cast our hopes to fix our eyes,  
On Christ, on Christ alone:

Give these, and then thy will be done!  
Thus strengthen'd with all might,  
We, by the Spirit and thy Son,  
Shall pray, and pray aright.

## PSALM LI.

HAVE mercy upon me, O God, according to thy  
loving-kindness; according unto the multitude of thy tender  
mercies blot out my transgressions. 2. Wash me thoroughly  
from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin, &c.

-----



## SERMON XLVIII.

“SO HE DROVE OUT THE MAN.” -- Gen. iii. 24.

“O WRETCHED MAN THAT I AM! WHO SHALL DELIVER ME FROM THE BODY OF THIS DEATH! I THANK GOD, THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD.” -- Romans vii. 24, 25.

HOLDING in our hands, as it were, these two texts, selected from the Old and from the New Testament, we propose, with God’s help, to offer to you to-night some thoughts upon these great subjects of *Man’s fallen life*, and *Man’s redeemed life*.

I. First then, *Man’s fallen life*, and that viewed, so to speak, externally and internally.

First, viewed externally. Consider for one moment the dark lines which are here drawn by God’s own hand upon the pages of God’s own book, and confess that they are accurately copied out and transcribed in the experience of life around us. In the first place, the seventeenth verse of this third chapter of the book of Genesis shows us, that man was condemned to toil and sorrow; no more allowed to remain there; no more allowed to obtain the produce of the earth, which perhaps it would have produced to him, without hard toil, having remained his willing servant; no

longer fed by the sacramental food of the tree of life, participation in which was immortality; condemned to all those ills to which flesh is now heir, to death, to disease, to pain -- "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return;" no longer permitted to tenant that fair home, or to walk beside the gleaming of the four-fold stream; exiled from the garden, and debarred from entering the gate which was closed against him by mysterious shapes and by points of flickering fire. And when we compare the fourth chapter of Genesis with the first three chapters, how truly do we see that man is indeed an exile from Eden. Read the first two chapters. How calm, how peaceful they are! There are few voices to be heard there -- only the voice of the everlasting Lord God communing in the depths of his own mysterious being with his coequal Son and with his coeternal Spirit; only that hymn of gratitude and praise which burst from the lips of Adam when he wakes from the prophetic sleep of ecstasy; only the gentle voice of the loving Lord communing with his children day after day in the depths of the garden. And then, consider for one moment all those echoes of sin, and sorrow, and care, and business, and pleasure, that are wakened up for us in the fourth chapter, that beginning of the moral and physical history of man as he now is. Read verse after verse. There is the cry of anger, there is the voice of blood going up to the throne of God, there is the hoarse murmur of remorse, there is the hum of the first city,

there is the lowing of the cattle, there are the instruments of music, there are the clashing metal and the roaring furnace, and then at the end of the first chapter only one thin column of prayer, and praise, and worship, rising on the heated air from the fountain that had once been full to overflowing of the presence of God -- "Then began men to call upon the name of Jehovah." Truly these sounds are the preludes of all the mingling sounds which in this busy and distracted century fill all our great cities. Truly we feel the force and the truth of the words which tell us, that "the Lord God hath driven him out of the garden."

Now, we all know that there is a very obvious and a very popular objection to such statements as this. Men cry out at once that it is a gloomy myth, the gloomy basis of a gloomy, dogmatic creed. "What!" they shriek out, "it is unjust! These priests tell us that one weak woman, and one who apparently was a weaker man, six thousand years ago transgressed the law of God, and put forth their hands and took of the forbidden fruit and did eat thereof, and what do these men tell us is the consequence? They tell us that for their sins the thorns and thistles run up into every man and woman's head, and heart, and brain; for their sins they tell us that the air is full of farewells to the dying and mournings for the dead; and worse than that, they tell us that poisoned fountains of sin are opened up within these hearts of ours that scorch and scathe and blacken the whole

fair creation of God.” This may be plausible; but after all, we believe that this old book is God's book, and all who are not atheists believe that this world is God's world. I ask you how is the charge heavier against God's book than it is against God's world? For, after all, these things are facts. You have only to go out, and you will see sin and sorrow in every shape. You can see some poor woman, the light perhaps of some miserable home, sobbing out that precious life of hers in the pangs of child-birth: you can see the funeral winding to the cemetery. Either these things had a moral cause, either they had spiritual antecedents, or they had not. If they had not, there is no moral order of the universe; and if they had what other origin can you assign than this -- “The Lord God drove him out of the garden?”

Now, consider for a few moments this fallen life of ours, viewed not externally, but internally. There are two preliminary observations which must here be made. In the first place, I think it is impossible for any one who has lived thirty or forty years in this life of ours not to have, either consciously or unconsciously, some general view, some general theory, of human nature. There are many such afloat. Let us very briefly take up three.

There lived in the course of the last century a great satirist, unhappily a vowed minister of God, who loved to burn out the lines of the pictures which he drew of human nature, as it were, in vitriolic acid. He seemed to delight in

exhibiting all the baseness, all the meanness, all the ugliness, all even of the physical repulsiveness, that there is in man. Sometimes he exhibited him under the microscope, sometimes under the magnifier, now on a lilliputian scale -- the word is his own -- now upon a gigantic scale. Now whatever men's theological views may be, they shrink from these representations as a libel upon human nature. They will not allow that --

“Every heart when sifted well  
Is but a clod of warmer dust  
Mixed with cunning sparks from hell.”

There is a view of human nature which is exactly at the opposite pole to this. An eminent statesman, who died not many years ago in advanced old age, surrounded by the love of friends and the gratitude of his country, is reported to have said that we are all born very good. It was an easy, sunny, genial sort of exaggeration, and most people are content to refute it with a significant smile.

There is, again, an intermediate view of human nature, which has been very ingeniously illustrated by a living poet. Human nature, he tells us, is like one of those glass balls or tops, which may be seen in one of our philosophical toy shops. When it is in a state of quiescence you can easily distinguish each tint, the bright tint on the one side, and the dark tint on the other side; but when you touch it with your

finger, and set it off spinning, you become completely perplexed: the darkness is suffused by the brightness, and the brightness is shaded by the darkness, till you do not well know what colour to call it. Something in the same way, in the incessant whirl and motion of this life of ours, men perplex you as to what judgment you shall pass upon them; there is so much goodness in those who seem worst, and so much that is bad in those who seem best.

I wish you also to consider for one moment the strange and terrible possibilities of sin, which unquestionably lurk in this human nature of ours. A work which was published not many years ago, contains what are believed by the initiated to be the actual confessions of an unhappy man of genius. This man in the days of his youth, upon one summer evening, declared positively that he had seen suddenly the shape of drunken man, running past him at first, then turning to him and looking at him with a terrible glance of hatred. He knelt down for one moment to peruse his features, and then he knew that the form, and figure, and face which he saw, were his own -- his own twenty years later, his own when the long lines of excess, and lust, and passion, and care, and sickness, had been ploughed down into it. Oh, who can measure the possible distance between himself now and himself twenty years hence -- between the innocent babe in the cradle and the haggard and outcast Magdalen under the gaslights of some great city

-- between the glorious youth of the poet's vision, riding on his winged steed to the castle gates, and the same man in after life, when his animal nature is worn down to the very stump, a grey and gap-toothed old man, lean as death?

Now, if we are asked to explain these terrible possibilities of sin, if we are asked to draw out a general view of human nature, which shall harmonize and take up all that there is of truth in these discordant views, then we need but turn, thank God, to our own Bibles; we need but range upon one side those texts which tell us of the image of God that still remains in man through all the ruins of the fall, and on the other those which tell us that the heart of man is "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked," and that "out of the heart of man proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies."

Now, see the bearing of this upon man's fallen will, and so upon the second of our two texts. Man even in his fall bears the image of God, in having a free will separate from the will of God, yet which ought not to be independent of Him. That will is free, yet there is a limitation. There is a law imposed upon man's will, a law which is holy and just and good, which, like the God who is its author, compasses him about day and night, and from which he can never escape -- a law to which he feels that he might freely conform himself every moment of his life, and which he is

yet constantly rejecting and baffling. And so it is that there seem evermore to be two wills in the mystery of the one will. There seem to be two men in the one man, those two men of whom when the French king heard he started from his seat, and said, “I know those two men very well -- those two wills and two men of whom the apostle speaks when he says, ‘I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.’”

II. Now, secondly, *The redeemed life*. As we have placed Adam at the head of the fallen life, so with deepest reverence we place Christ our Lord at the head of the redeemed life. And observe, that Christ is here, Christ is in these opening chapters of the Book of Genesis. With the whole church of God we refer to Him that first gospel, “I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” Dim and indistinct indeed the promise must be admitted to be; yet something in the same way as upon some pale winter morning we see a shape dimly in the mirror, and yet recognize it, because we have seen it before, because we have seen it in the broad daylight, so in that dim, far back winter morning we see a shape dimly in the mirror, and yet recognize it, because we have seen it before, because we have seen it in the broad daylight, so in that dim, far back winter morning of prophecy, we can see Christ in that first



promise, because we have seen Him fully before in the gospel and in the church. Original sin is the fault and corruption of man's nature. It is the fault, therefore we are guilty. That guilt is forgiven by God's great mercy, first, when we are grafted into the second Adam by a new birth of water and of the Spirit; and then afterwards, when the infection which still remains breaks out into fresh transgressions, still there is forgiveness, forgiveness for every sinner, forgiveness full and free, forgiveness through the blood of Christ, to all them that "truly repent and unfeignedly believe his holy gospel."

But the redeemed life includes something more than even the forgiveness of sin, blessed though that be. It includes an emancipated will. Man's will, as we have seen is weak and sick. It is a universal law of our moral life, that when we go and seek for strength by trying to lay our weak will upon a stronger will, that strength is almost invariably given. Nay, to seek the strength is to find it. Take some instances. Some man filling, we will say, a public situation is tempted day after day to the commission of some act, which is not only sin against God, but also transgression against society. Does such a man as that feel no strength, derive no strength, from public opinion? And observe this, that the higher we ascend in the moral scale the greater is the strength given. A pupil of the greatest modern schoolmaster has left it upon record, how when in the

moments of conscious weakness and temptation he went to his master and sought to derive strength from the grandeur of that strong will of his, he felt as if his feet were lifted up, and as if he were set upon a rock. So is it evermore. In every great city how often has some poor tempted young man who perhaps has begun to pilfer from his master and to falsify his accounts, gone to some pious friend and derived strength, and hope and consolation have spring up within him. Or, perhaps some poor weak girl, allured on to the brink of an awful precipice, has gone to her mother at night and told her all; and as her mother has spoken to her of strength and pity, she has felt as if the very breath of God blew upon that passionate and fevered cheek of hers. Now, does not this lead us up to the mystery of the redemption of the will? Ever as the sympathy of the stronger will is purer and better, so the strength given to the weaker is more blessed and more abundant. Suppose you were haunted day after day with some terrible temptation, suppose some dread secret lay upon your heart and conscience to whom would you go and tell it? Would you go and tell it to one like yourself? Would you go to some man of the world, who seems to have no principle but that code of honour which appears to be so lax, and which yet can be so dreadfully unforgiving? Would you go to some woman of the world with the exquisite finish of that polished scorn of hers? Better to die than that. You would not. You would go to

the best, to the purest, to the holiest, to the most Christ-like being, that you could possibly find. Is not this the secret of prayer? Is not this the meaning of the Christian's daily prayer, of his approach to the holy communion? Evermore, when the will is felt to be weakest, we go to the incarnate God by the means which He himself has appointed; we go to that precious, loving, sympathizing Lord; and the language of the poor souls, addressed to Him who has trodden the bitter grapes of our sins in the awful winepress, is practically just this: "Thou who are whiter than driven snow, immaculate Lamb of God, upon whose pure and perfect human will, upon the perfect will of whose superhuman humanity, all the shadows of temptation could no more leave an impression than the passing shadows upon the pillared alabaster -- thou art pure, and I come to thee for strength because thy will is perfect. I cry unto thee from the ends of the earth. 'Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.' Take this weak will of mine, and lift it up, and fold it with the unfoldings of that everlasting strength of thine."

May we not read in the light of these great truths the seventh and eighth chapters of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans? There seem to be three stages in the seventh chapter -- man before the law, man under the law, man under grace; first, moral insensibility, then moral knowledge without moral power, then the great emancipation. First unconscious ignorance; then comes the law of God: for in

the tenth commandment, “Thou shalt not covet,” the whole intense holiness and spirituality of the law seems to be concentrated, and that sword of God goes on and down, cutting deeper and deeper, until He has cleft and divided into twain, on the one hand, the decaying, decomposing body of moral and spiritual death, on the other hand, the weak and fluttering will; and the last and lowest cry of the fallen life is, “O wretched man that I am! while the first blessed cry of the redeemed life is even this, “I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Now there are just two words which I wish to say before closing. What has been said goes to explain to us much that seems darkest and most unaccountable in the structure and in the particulars of the Bible history. It was said now many years ago by a writer who is very unjustly forgotten, that history is like a pall covering dead men’s bones and all uncleanness, but that it covers them gracefully. So it does. It covers them gracefully enough. Take up some volume of history: the narrative runs on smoothly in the master’s hand: vice, and sin, and selfishness are dwarfed and dwindled in the distance: the hero walks forth in his majesty, and all his littleness is forgotten: the statesman is there with his specious pretensions, and with this ornate speeches, and with his claim to the divine right of always being with the majority and of always acting upon the winning side: and all these inconsistencies, if they

are remembered at all, are only like specks in the sunny foreground of the brilliant history. How different is it with God's inspired history? If we had to frame a history which men should suppose to be God's history, a divine history, what would be its character? It should be pure, it should be perfect, it should be noble, it should be a following on of saints and martyrs winding on with the cross upon their shoulders and the light upon their brows, through the gates and the crowd, to the very throne of God. And yet how different is that divine history which we actually find in the Bible, from these surmises? Turn to those chapters which record, first the fall of man, then the sin of the whole world, then the transgressions of the cities of the plain that brought down fire from heaven, then the revolting story of the revenge of Simeon and Levi for their sister Dinah, then the baseness, and the selfishness, and the brutality of Joseph's brethren. We ask why these things are there, why they are written? For our instruction -- not only to show us the latent possibilities of human nature, but they are the beginning of a story of a long, long, history, of which the fall is the commencement and the redemption is the end. They justify, they verify at least, and they illustrate, the whole of the fall; and they justify, if they cannot explain, that redemption which could only be wrought for sinners by the life and death, by the passion and resurrection, of our incarnate God. Yes, still as we think of the corruption and

the fall of man, and of the redemption wrought by Christ, let us look at it as St. Paul looks at it in the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. Have you ever remarked how St. Paul begins there the comparison between the first and second Adam in slow and measured lines, till, as he goes on, that great spirit of his catches fire, and there are parallel lines of light and darkness, and at last, the delicate line of light broadens and deepens, shining more and more unto the perfect day? Yes, Christ our Lord, Christ the second Adam, Christ in whom there is redemption, Christ into whom we are grafted by the baptism of the Spirit, Christ in whom we live by faith -- Christ is our redemption. This is the great truth that has power to stir all the most varied hearts, and to make them bow before its strength as the corn-fields bend before the rushing winds of heaven. In Him, in Christ Jesus, the precious Lord and Saviour of every one of us, the fallen life may pass into the redeemed life; in Him the cry of anguish, "O wretched man that I am," may be taken up, and swell into that triumphant music -- "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord;" in Him, exiles as we are, we may win a right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates, and pass into the city which is our home.

-- WILLIAM ALEXANDER, D.D.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

### THE UPPER ROOM.

WHEN the time drew near at which Jesus knew that he was to die and go up to be with his Father, he set out from Galilee, and showed himself quite bent on going to Jerusalem. But he spoke many good words, and did many good works, while on his way. After he came to Jerusalem, he taught the people, and produced a great stir among his bitter foes, by curing a man who had been blind from birth. Then, as the Jews sought to stone him, and his hour was not quite come, he left the city for a time, and went away beyond Jordan. He returned not long after, and raised Lazarus from the dead. Then he left the city a second time, and staid in a place down on the border of the wilderness. When the passover, however, drew near, he came back once more to Bethany, and a wonderful week of events followed. Some of these have been told in former stories. I am now going to tell you what happened on the last day of that week, or in the last twenty-four hours of our blessed Lord's life on the earth. I do not know how I could better close this year of stories, than by asking you to give me your best thoughts, while I try to set before you the way by which Jesus at last went to his Father, from whom he had come.

Let us, first of all, go to the upper room where he ate the passover with his disciples for the last time, and appointed the Lord's Supper. In the earlier part of the day he had sent two of them to get every thing ready, giving them a curious sign to direct them where to go. The two disciples that went on before were Peter and John. Every thing happened to them as Jesus had said it would. For on entering the city, they met a man who was carrying a pitcher of water, and followed him to the house to which he was going. They asked to see the goodman of the house, and said to him, The Master says that his time is at hand, and that he is coming to eat the passover here, along with his disciples; where is the guest-chamber that we may make all things ready? The householder, on hearing these things, took them at once to a large upper room, furnished and prepared, just as if he had been expecting them. Towards the evening Jesus came with the rest, and sat down with them all around him. In those days the seats were rather sloping couches, on which the guests lay long, with their heads towards the table, and the feet stretched out behind. It was in this way that the woman, who loved Jesus so much for saving her from her sins, could stand and wash his feet with her tears, when he was at meat in Simon's house. At the passover-supper in the upper room, John reclined next to his Lord, and was, as it were, in his bosom. When



they were all in their places, Jesus said to them, I have had a great desire to keep this feast with you, before I suffer.

Now, would you think it? though these twelve men, chosen by Christ to be his apostles, were all now round about him, all, one would think, happy in being near him, a contention had arisen among them as to which of them should be greatest. Jesus knew this, and spoke to them about it. He said that in his service the greatest was to be the person who would be like the least, and should help others most. He said, too, that he had been among them himself like a servant; and when supper was fully served, he showed this in a beautiful parable of action. For he rose from table, and put his upper robe aside, and took a towel, and girded it round his person. He then poured some water into a basin, and began to wash the feet of his disciples, one after another, and to wipe them with the towel. When he came to Simon Peter, Peter, who was always ready to speak out his feelings, said to him, Lord, thou shalt never wash my feet. He could not bear the thought of his great Master doing such a thing. But Jesus calmly answered him, and said, Unless I wash thee, thou hast no part with me. That made Peter go off to the opposite extreme: for he cried out, Then, Lord, not my feet only, but my hands and head too. Jesus put him right again, saying that was not needful; for those who had been bathed were clean, and only needed to have the dust washed from their feet. Then he said

solemnly, Ye are clean, though not all; for he knew that one of those whose feet he had been washing, had it already in his heart to give him up into the hands of his enemies. So he said, Ye are not all clean. When he had finished his tender and humble task, he put the towel off, and put on his garments, and took his place again at the table, and said, See, if I your lord and master have washed your feet, surely you ought not to quarrel with each other about greatness, but be willing to serve each other, and to do as I have done unto you. The disciples, I think, must have felt how faithfully, and yet how very kindly, he had shown them their fault.

Some time after, while they were eating, Jesus appeared very sad, like one much troubled. At last he spoke out, and said, One of you is going to betray me. When the disciples heard that, they were all very sorry indeed, and one after another, cried out, Lord, is it I? Only Judas Iscariot did not say a word. The rest kept looking at each other in distress and wonder, till Peter whispered to John who was next the Saviour, to ask him who it was that was to be so wicked. John having asked accordingly, Jesus said, It is the man to whom I will now give a morsel when I have dipped it. So he took a sop, and dipped it into the dish, and gave it to Iscariot. Being thus pointed out, Judas exclaimed, Lord is it I you mean? and Jesus said it was. Then the man -- angry, I suppose, at being detected, and

urged on by Satan to whom he had yielded up his heart -- got up from the table, and left the room. But as Jesus had said to him, What you are going to do, do quickly, some of the rest of the disciples thought he had sent him out to buy something that was required for the feast: for Judas was the treasurer of the little company, and carried the purse. By the time these things happened, the night had fallen; and so the traitor went off to do his dark work.

There was more conversation after that. Among other things, Jesus said to them all, Ye will be stumbled and offended by what you see done to me to-night, and will leave me. When he heard that, Peter again spoke out boldly, and said, Though all the rest should forsake thee, I never will, Lord. Jesus looked to him, and said solemnly, Simon, Simon, you are to go through a great trial. Satan wants to sift you like wheat. But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith may not fail, and when thou art brought back, help thy brethren. Peter would not hear about being brought back; he was so sure he would not go away. So he cried out, Lord, I will go to prison with thee, if need be, and to death itself. Ah! said Jesus, you think you are ready to lay down your life for me, Peter; and yet before the cock crow, you will three times over deny that you know me. Even that plain word, however, would not make Peter suspect himself. He said, "Never, never; I will rather die than deny thee. And all the rest eagerly and vehemently said the same, each

seeming more confident than his neighbor in his own strength.

Some time a little later; Jesus appointed a new service for his disciples. It was a very simple one, though it has since got laid over with much that does not belong to it as the Lord commanded it. He gave it to keep his death always in mind. He took bread, and gave thanks for it, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take and eat; this is my body broken for you: do this to keep me in remembrance. Then he took the cup that was on the table, and gave thanks again, and put the cup into the disciples' hands, and said, All drink of this; it is my blood of the new covenant, shed for many, that their sins may be forgiven: do this in remembrance of me. Thus it was that the Lord's Supper was appointed. It has continued in the churches for hundreds of years. It is a preacher of Christ wherever it is observed. "For as often as ye eat this bread," says the apostle Paul, "and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come."

After this Jesus, seeing the disciples sad because he had been speaking of going away from them, and of his sufferings being at hand, began to say very comforting things to them. He told them he was going away to make a place ready for them in his Father's house, and would come back again to take them with him. He said he would send them, meanwhile, another Comforter, the Holy Spirit to

stay with them, and guide them. He said he would leave his peace with them, and bade them cease being troubled in heart because of his going away. Then, knowing that his own hour was at hand, he said, I shall not have much more time to talk with you; Satan is coming to search me, but he can find nothing that is his in me. Rise, let us go hence.

So with his disciples he left the room, and went out beyond the walls of the city.

## QUESTIONS FROM THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Where is Jesus said to have set his face to go to Jerusalem, so that other people could see he was bent on going thither?
2. What was the name of the place where Jesus staid for some time, before he went back finally to Bethany and Jerusalem?
3. Where do we read about the upper room in Jerusalem after the Lord's ascension?
4. Which of the evangelists tells us that it was Peter and John who were sent before to prepare the passover?
5. When did Christ, on another occasion, send two disciples to do something for him, telling them beforehand what to say?

6. Where do we read of Christ teaching his disciples not to strive about being great, by showing them a little child, and speaking about him?

7. In what psalm have we a prayer for washing from sin?

8. Where are the robes of the redeemed said to have been washed white in the blood of Jesus?

9. Where is John called the disciple whom Jesus loved, after he was risen from the dead?

10. Who was it that thought he would be a dog, if he were to do the bad things a prophet spoke of, yet afterwards did them?

11. Which of the apostles was not present when Jesus appointed the Supper, yet gives us an exact account of it?

12. Where is the ordinance appointed by Jesus in remembrance of himself, called the Lord's Supper?

13. Where is it referred to as the breaking of bread?

ANSWERS to the questions may be found by turning to the following chapters. -- Luke ix.; John xi.; Acts i.; Luke xxii.; Matt. xxi.; Matt. xviii; Ps. li.; Rev. vii.; John xx. and xxi.; 2 Kings viii.; 1 Cor. xi.; Acts xx.

-----

*Prayer.*

O LORD, who didst send Thy beloved Son to die for the sins of men, wash us from all our guilt in His precious blood. Cleanse us from all our stains, that our robes may be white. Create within us right spirits. Give us the new heart Thou hast graciously promised. In all our troubles may we have the sympathy of Jesus. May we have an interest in the prayers which He presents for His people before the throne of His Father. O grant us in this way to have part with Him, and to have a place prepared for us by Him in Thy house of many mansions. We ask these things for His own name's sake. *Amen.*

-----

## THE EVENING SERVICE

O KING of Kings! who hast raised from the dead Thine only Son Jesus Christ, and hast given Him all power on earth and in Heaven, and who didst not leave Thine apostles comfortless, vouchsafe, we beseech Thee, to give us Thy Holy Spirit to guide and comfort us; that, being sober, and watching unto prayer, and above all things having fervent charity among ourselves, we may be exalted into the same place whither our Saviour Christ is gone before, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm cxviii.* 22-29.

HOW sweet the name of Jesus sounds  
In a believer's ear!  
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,  
And drives away his fear.

It makes the wounded spirit whole,  
And calms the troubled breast:  
'Tis manna to the hungry soul,  
And to the weary, rest.



Dear name! the rock on which I build:  
My shield and hiding-place,  
My never failing treasury, filled  
With boundless stores of grace.

Jesus, my Shepherd, Guardian, Friend;  
My Prophet, Priest, and King;  
My Lord, my life, my Way, mine End,  
Accept the praise I bring.

Weak is the effort of my heart,  
And cold my warmest thought;  
But when I see Thee as Thou art,  
I'll praise Thee as I ought:

Till then, I would Thy love proclaim  
With every fleeting breath;  
And may the music of Thy name  
Refresh my soul in death.

#### MALACHI IV.

FOR, behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven;  
and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be

stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. 2. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. 3. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet, in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts. 4. Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. 5. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: 6. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

## 2 PETER III. 1-14.

THIS second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: 2. That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandments of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour; 3. Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after

their own lusts, 4. And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. 5. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: 6. Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: 7. But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. 8. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. 10. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up. 11. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness; 12. Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? 13. Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

14. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

-----

O LORD, we adore Thee as the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, who faintest not, neither art weary. Thou art the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever. With Thee one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. Heaven and earth shall wax old as a vesture, but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail.

Thou hast made the successive generations of mankind to spring forth as the grass, and to flourish like the green herb. Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. We spend our years as a tale that is told. Our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding. Our childhood hastens on to youth and manhood; and soon the evil days shall come, and the years draw nigh, when we shall say that we have no pleasure in them. Teach us O Lord, to pass the time of our sojourning in Thy fear, and to number our days so as to apply our hearts unto wisdom. We confess that the brevity of our life will not

teach us to consider our latter end without Thy grace. Grant us then Thy Holy Spirit, that he may lead us to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, and to do whatsoever our hand findeth to do with our might. We bless Thee for the mission and incarnation, for the sacrifice and death of our divine Saviour, and for the light which His glorious gospel sheds upon all the stages of human life. We thank Thee for its invitations to the young, for its cautions and counsels to those who are in the fulness of their strength, and for its succours and consolations to those who are bending under the weight of age. Grant that all of us, according to our years, may find Thy grace sufficient for us, and Thy strength made perfect in our weakness. Teach us to embrace the common salvation as equally needed for our sin and for our sorrow, and may we all be complete in Christ Jesus our only hope. Bless us as a family; and may the young remember their Creator in the days of their youth, and the more advanced in years hold the beginning of their confidence steadfast unto the end. May we alike glorify God in the day of visitation. May we forget those things which are behind, and reach forth unto those which are before. May our path be like the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

Now unto Him that is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God, even our Saviour, be

glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. *Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

#### *Morning.*

**And they shall be my people, and I will be their God:**

These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:

As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.

Jer. xxxii. 38. John xvii. 1, 2, 9, 10.

#### *Evening.*

**The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul:  
the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.**

The Lord preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me.

For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the  
disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the  
wisdom of the world?

Ps. xix. 7. Ps. cxvi. 6. 1 Cor. i. 19, 20.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**I called upon thy name, O Lord, out of the low  
dungeon.**

Thou hast heard my voice; hide not thine ear at my  
breathing, at my cry.

Thou drewest near in the day that I called upon thee:  
thou saidst, Fear not.

O Lord, thou hast pleaded the causes of my soul; thou  
hast redeemed my life.

Thou, O Lord, remainest for ever; thy throne from  
generation to generation.

Wherefore dost thou forget us for ever, and forsake us  
so long time?

Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be  
turned: renew our days as of old.

Lam. iii. 55, 56, 57, 58. Lam. v. 19, 20, 21.



*Evening.*

**We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ: we are weak, but ye are strong: ye are honourable, we are despised.**

Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place;

And labour, working with our own hands; being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it;

Being defamed, we entreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the off-scouring of all things unto this day.

I write not these things to shame you, but, as my beloved sons, I warn you.

1 Cor. iv. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.

## WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Then Jesus, answering, said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached.**

And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.

The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.

They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine.

Luke vii. 22. Isa. xxix. 18, 19, 24.

*Evening.*

**The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind: the Lord raiseth them that are bowed down: the Lord loveth the righteous.**

But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end.

For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens, God himself that formed the earth, and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord, and there is none else.

I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain: I the Lord speak righteousness, I declare things that are right.

Ps. cxlvi. 8. Isa. xlv. 17, 18, 19.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**And Moses said unto the Lord, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant; but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.**

And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made a man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the Lord?

Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.

Take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate; but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost.

Exod. iv. 10, 11, 12.    Mark xiii. 11.

*Evening.*

**I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ:**

That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge.

For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

1 Cor. i. 4, 5, 17, 18, 21.

## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**Arise, O Lord; O God, lift up thine hand: forget not the humble.**

But I am poor and sorrowful: let thy salvation O God, set me up on high.

The humble shall see this, and be glad: and your heart shall live that seek God.

For the Lord heareth the poor and despiseth not his prisoners.

For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

Ps. x. 12. Ps. lxi. 29, 32, 33. Isa. lvii. 15.

*Evening.*

**For God is not unrighteous, to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.**

And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:

That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.

Heb. vi. 10, 11, 12. 2. Pet. i. 10.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**Use hospitality one to another without grudging.**

As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us; see that ye abound in this grace also.

For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.

A lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just,  
holy, temperate;

Holding fast the faithful word.

1 Pet. iv. 9, 10.    2 Cor. viii. 7, 12.    Tit. i. 8, 9.

*Evening.*

**Let all your things be done with charity.**

But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap  
also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap  
also bountifully.

Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so  
let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth  
a cheerful giver.

And God is able to make all grace abound toward you;  
that ye, always having all-sufficiency in all things, may  
abound to every good work:

As it is written, he hath dispersed abroad: he hath  
given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever.

1 Cor. xvi. 14.    2 Cor. ix. 6, 7, 8, 9.

# HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

## FORTY-NINTH WEEK.

### MORNING WORSHIP.

HEARER of prayer! we beseech Thee favourably to hear the prayers of Thy people, that we, who by Thy grace are called to the course of a Christian life, may so run the race that is set before us, as to obtain that incorruptible crown which Thou hast promised to them that love Thee. Hold up our goings in Thy paths, that our footsteps slip not. Teach us to wait habitually on Thee, that, our strength being thus renewed, we may run, and not be weary; and may walk, and not faint. As becometh those who strive for the mastery, give us to be temperate in all things. Grant these our prayers through Jesus Christ our Saviour. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* lxxiv. 20-23.

CHRIST, whose glory fills the skies,  
Christ, the true, the only light;  
Sun of Righteousness, arise,  
Triumph o'er the shades of night;  
Dayspring from on high be near;  
Daystar, in my heart appear.

Dark and cheerless is the morn  
Unaccompanied by thee;  
Joyless is the day's return  
Till thy mercy's beams I see,  
Till they inward light impart,  
Glad my eyes, and warm my heart.

Visit then this soul of mine;  
Pierce the gloom of sin and grief;  
Fill me, Radiancy Divine;  
Scatter all my unbelief;  
More and more thyself display,  
Shining to the perfect day.



## NEHEMIAH I.

THE words of Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah. And it came to pass in the month Chisleu, in the twentieth year, as I was in Shushan the palace, 2. That Hanani, one of my brethren, came, he and certain men of Judah; and I asked them concerning the Jews that had escaped, which were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem. 3. And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity here in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burnt with fire. 4. And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven, 5. And said, I beseech thee, O Lord God of heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him, and observe his commandments: 6. Let thine ear now be attentive, and thine eyes open, that thou mayest hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel, which we have sinned against thee: both I and my father's house have sinned. 7. We have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments, which thou commandedst thy servant Moses. 8. Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandedst

thy servant Moses, saying, If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations: 9. But if ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them, though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there. 10. Now these are thy servants, and thy people, whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power, and by thy strong hand. 11. O Lord, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name; and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man. For I was the king's cup-bearer.

-----

*Prayer.*

CAUSE us to hear Thy lovingkindness in the morning, O Lord our God, for in Thee do we trust; cause us to know the way wherein we should walk, for we lift up our souls unto Thee.

We are deeply conscious of having wicked hearts, whose evil desires are strengthened by the temptations of

the world. We have no way of resisting the evil and choosing the good, except by our coming unto Thee to hide us, and asking Thee to save us from the snares of sin around us, and from the deceitfulness of our own hearts. Now, therefore, O most merciful God, we call upon Thy name; we stir up ourselves to take hold on Thee.

We thank Thee that Thou hast not dealt with us as we dealt with Thee, nor hast turned away Thy face from us when we turned away with all our might from Thee. When our mountain stood strong we forgot Thee; but yet when we had none to help us, and no hand could save us, we cried unto the Lord, and he heard us, and saved us out of our distresses. Yea, Thou hast followed us with Thy mercy in all the way of our wanderings; when we fell Thou hast lifted us up; and when we sought to return from the service of the stranger, and from the far country, Thou hast been ready to guide us back to the light of Thy countenance and to our own safety.

And now, therefore, led by all Thy goodness to repentance, and overcome by all Thy love, we come unto Thee, and beseech Thee to accept us, to keep us and to make us Thine -- Thine now, and for ever Thine. We seek to enter upon this day believing that all is full of Thee; that whether we go forth or abide in the house, whether we are with others or alone, we are evermore with Thee. As the dew of the morning, let Thy grace be upon us; as the light

of the sun, let Thine own truth lead us in the way by which we go. Keep us from all errors of heart and lip and life; from all unkindly suspicions and selfish thoughts; from all double-dealing, scheming, and untruthfulness; from all self-righteousness, pride, and vanity; from all sullenness, fretfulness, and evil anger. Make us humble, and gentle, and pure; watching every word and deed lest we should sin against thee, and should cause that holy name by which we are called to be profaned among those that see our conduct and conversation.

Especially give us grace to seek Thee, and to find Thee, this day in Thy house of prayer. Raise up everywhere able and faithful ministers of Thy word, to tell their brethren, from the fulness of their own experience, the wonders of thy redeeming love.

Comfort and sustain all those who are in trouble, whether of mind, or body, or outward estate: defend the weak, the fatherless, and the widow; prepare for their departure those who are drawing near to death.

Especially we pray Thee to bless those we love. Perfect Thy good work in them and by them, and make all things to work together for their good. May we and all those who are dear to us be joined together by a bond which time and trouble cannot weaken, and death itself cannot sever, but which will grow closer and closer throughout eternity.

Be pleased to hear us for Thy Son's sake. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

GRACIOUS Father, deeply sensible of our own weakness we come unto Thee for help and strength. Under all the trials and temptations which now beset our path enable us to endure to the end, and to be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, that we may obtain the promised salvation through Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm xxxii.* 5-7.

O WHY art thou cast down, my soul?  
Say why distrustful still,  
Thy thoughts, with vain impatience roll  
O'er scenes of future ill?

Let faith suppress each rising fear,  
Each anxious doubt exclude;  
Thy Maker's will hath placed thee here,  
Thy Maker, wise and good.

He to thy every trial knows  
Its just restraints to give,  
Attentive to behold thy woes,

And faithful to relieve.  
Though griefs unnumber'd throng thee  
round;  
Still in thy God confide  
Whose finger marks the seas their bound,  
And curbs the headlong tide.

### JAMES I.

JAMES, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting. 2. My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; 3. Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. 4. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. 5. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. 6. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering: for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. 7. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord. 8. A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways. 9. Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted; 10. But the rich, in that he is made low, &c.

-----

## SERMON XLIX.

“HE THAT ENDURETH TO THE END SHALL BE SAVED.”

-- Matt. x. 22.

ONE of the greatest men the world has ever seen attributed all his success to perseverance. It may be true that all the faculty of perseverance is just as much the Creator's gift as any other endowment possessed by the creature, and that it is therefore unfair to speak of native gifts, and of this application of them, as things essentially different. But leaving all such high ground, it is practically true that success is usually won by the man who keeps the end before him and does not swerve from his own aim. The matter is so far under control, that perseverance is the result of a strong will; and that as in the conception of a purpose so in the working it out, a man's attainment is very nearly measured by his determination. It is endurance unto the end that makes the result in life's battle.

It is not mere power, but the purpose which directs it, that fashions the issues of life. Take school companions as they were, with the promise of their boyhood fresh upon them, and take them now with the performance of their manhood, or the fruits of their old age, and say whether either the hopes or the fears which they excited have been realized? Who is the foremost of them now? He to whom tasks were no trouble, and on whose young life all seemed

to shine -- he of nature's gifting -- has been a prodigal of nature's bounty, wasting time and talents in frivolity, and is now disappointed, soured, subordinate: while another, who was of very ordinary mark, has been silently, constantly, fighting his battle with the world, and a victor in many an encounter, is silently, constantly, fighting it still. We may have seen the owner of talent, the heir of opportunities, dig for himself an early and unhonoured grave, or survive, a mere wreck in mind, body, and outward estate: while another, whom early need forced to work and be careful, is still rising, with the approbation of his kind.

Who is not familiar also with proofs that this law of success to the constant, is not only very strong, but very exacting? Who has not seen some man climb to the very height, and then, as though his elevation made him giddy, lose his footing, totter, and fall into the depths again?

Broad and strong as is this rule, there are many exceptions; and causes over which a man has no control may baffle the most honest striving. One whom health has failed, or from whom friends have been taken away, may look up amid his disappointment and sadly ask, Where is now the promise of success that was to follow endurance? We cannot point such to a certainty of brighter and better days below; but it may be, that if they look upon all as lost, we can point them to a higher end.

The end is not yet. Their end may have come; but not the rightful, the divinely-appointed end. Their ambition may have been directed to an unworthy object, or so mixed with unworthy motives that, for their well-being's sake, it



was baffled. Their heart may have been increasing in imperfection, and so may have needed the discipline of defeat. Or, God may have set His mark upon them, and be preparing them for something better than they desired; making them perfect through suffering. Life is not money: souls are not honour: our spirits cannot be nursed on fortune or on fame: and it is even well that there are failures in the race of earthly ambition, to awaken thought of what is higher than the earth, and more lasting than time.

For in all these things, earth is but a type; this complicated, struggling scene is but a symbol of the spiritual world in which we fight; the law of success in this world is general, yet broken: that, alike in its struggle and its imperfection, it may suggest the eternal law of Christ, that he who endureth to the end shall be saved. That law was true of the coming doom on Judea -- of the conflict which our Lord predicted as in store for the young church of Christ. It is true of all times of persecution and danger into which believers may be cast. It is true whether they are slain or survive; true of Stephen as of John: they are saved by their endurance; whether life or trial first cease to be -- *the end is salvation!* If we look to this higher end of our faith, the salvation of our souls, then shall we win the prize of our high calling.

How shall our words have a bearing on every one of us? In considering some aspects of that great spiritual struggle to which we are called, we shall regard our Lord's words as encouraging us to endure to the end of,

I., *Temptation*. Temptation has two meanings -- a general and a special: the former being trial or test of any kind; the latter being direct solicitation to sin. The word has both senses in the New Testament, and in either sense it is within the scope of the text. But at present we use the word, as it is most commonly used among us, to denote solicitation to sin. Well may we endure it unto the end. We seek to be on the Lord's side, and are sworn to resist sin. If we are on the Lord's side, He will not suffer us to be tempted beyond our endurance. "He will, with every temptation provide a way of escape, that we may be able to bear it." When we bear the knowledge of this truth with us, we are armed in panoply of proof against which no weapon of the enemy can prosper: and Satan never tries to pierce it, but, to make us lay it aside. If our faith be strong enough to let us realize that we are in God's hands, and that from Him will come deliverance, we have a power of endurance which cannot be destroyed.

For there is in the very thought an assurance that the temptation will have an end. We are not suffering under a perpetual trial: but under one that will terminate in God's good time. There is exceeding strength in the very thought. It wraps itself round our being, that sin with which we fight -- it almost stifles our better nature; but, strong though it be, it must pass away. And therefore, instead of merely looking into our trial, were it not better to look through it to the brighter light beyond? We are weak as Samson shorn, when we forget the faithfulness of Him who promised, and the grandeur of our destiny, and the brief existence of that

which allures us: but we are strong in the might of heaven when we remember these things and endure. The battle is not between the powers of sin and us, feeble creatures; but it is between them, strong for a moment, and us, children of eternity: between them, who are baffled if not victorious now, and us, who are triumphant if only we endure. If we persist in saying, Here am I, a child of eternity, cannot be satisfied with this thing of an hour: I, to whom the succours of heaven will come, shall stand out until this evil day be done -- we shall wear the victor's crown. The sick man is upheld through his weary nights and restless days by the hope of returning health: the captive bears up against the despair of his dungeon, in the hope that he shall yet be free: the shipwrecked sailor on the rock in the sea is sustained by the hope that a sail shall come up on the horizon, bringing deliverance: and shall not the Christian be firm -- I do not say in the hope, but -- in the certainty of salvation!

There is an exceeding comfort, too, in the promise being made to humble *endurance*. It meets many a poor sinner's case who dares not speak of victory, but may cherish this humble hope of enduring unto the end. Some saints may go to meet the tempter with proud and consciousness of victory written on their foreheads and gleaming in their eye, and, in the fulness of their union with Him who overcame, may sing by anticipation their proud hymn of praise; but many a sinner who knows his own weakness, may be thankful that the promise comes down to the lower class who can barely endure. There have been noble saints whose courage never seemed to fail, nor their

arm to slacken; but there must be many who at the best look back on their bygone conflict with sin, not as a victory of which they can boast, but as mere constancy sustained by grace, for which they are thankful. There is no ground for glorying of that day of trial when we were too willing to embrace our darling sin, and barely restrained our quivering arms; when we were too ready to desert God's people for the foe, and were only held back by a power that came from outside of our own will: when we were about to sink in the waves, like Peter, and, like him, just succeeded in grasping the Redeemer's hand: we endured and we are saved, thank God! thank God! but we cannot glory. Temptation is too solemn a thing to be met with light heart: it is too strong to be warned away like a spectral phantom: it was too near to conquering us to let us glory in a result which, after all, our own right hand did not win. Watch and pray, that ye enter not into it; and when it comes, stand firm in the armour of God. It will often be that we cannot fight, but we can bear: we cannot hurl back the darts, but we can stand firm though they pierce us: we can no more stop the temptation than the raving blast; but, as the camel crouches while the sand storm whirls, we can lie flat on the promises of God till it have hurried over us; and therefore, be faithful to the end -- endure a little longer. Moses endured, as seeing Him who is invisible. The pleasures of sin were for a season, but he bore suffering rather than have them; and still is it true, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive a crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."

II. But our Lord's words are an encouragement to us to endure to the end of *trial of any kind*. A picture of sorrow and suffering is drawn, and in connection with that the promise is given. To bear suffering is a virtue of the rarest kind, and scripture speaks of it with a frequency that shows its importance. We are exhorted, encouraged, and commanded to endure: precepts and promises are accumulated to brace up believing hearts for the trial; the illustrious of old are represented as witnessing our race, so that we may run with patience; and we are above all pointed to Him who endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now set down on the right hand of God. His glory is represented as springing from His sufferings and proportioned to them. He humbled Himself, wherefore God exalted Him: He suffered, and by His suffering was perfected: He died, and therefore is the Lord of life: He was a sacrifice, and therefore the Lamb is heaven's crowned King. Consider Him -- Messiah, Lord, and King -- who endured such a contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations, knowing this, that the trying of our faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

It is the same principle as in the endurance of temptation; it is bearing the finite for the infinite; not flinching from the temporal, because of the eternal. It is looking through the trial to its close, through the cloud-rift to the stars, through the breakers to the haven where by the

breath of mercy we shall assuredly be brought in peace at last. Thus hope uprears the drooping head; thus for the sake of permanent health, the patient bears for a moment the cruel knife; thus, for the sake of honour, the soldier dares the battle; thus, to win skill, young hearts and hands endure the tedious elements of apprenticeship. Thus, too are Christians called to count all trial but the discipline whereby they are perfected -- the fire whereby their faith is refined; and are taught to regard present sufferings as unworthy to be compared with the glory that shall follow.

Yet let us remember for our instruction, that some *anticipate the end in their impatient hope of the victory* which it will bring. Such Christians in the time of trial are possessed by an impatience which embitters the suffering while it does not hasten the release. We may have seen a good and pious man suddenly lose all self-command when the stroke of trouble falls upon him, and become fretful, even murmur, because impatient for the end. He makes no use of present grace, in his impatient longing for the grace that shall set him free. He counts them happy which are painless, but the Bible counts them blessed that endure. He does not let patience have her perfect work, and his very assurance of the end makes him incapable of waiting for it.

Others anticipate the end *in their despairing helpless idea that it has already come, when they have known only the beginning*. They think all is over with them at the first attack. They surrender to one assault. The heart is overwhelmed, and faith becomes imbecile. The spring of their vitality seems to be broken. They bear as a lifeless

thing would, but they do not endure as a child of God might. To the disconsolate mourner, to the perplexed disciple, to the weary prostate sufferer, would God these words of Paul were imparted: "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, yet not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be manifested in our body."

Let us remember this truth also in a *time of falling away*. Such times have come in the Christian church, and will come again even to the end, for they are always needed. Of such a time our Lord warned his disciples -- a time of unbelief and prevailing iniquity, when the Lord's arm should seem shortened, that it could not save. The Christian church has always grown wanton or cold, has always ceased to do the Master's work, when all things were too pleasant and fair. Form has been confounded with faith, and profession with the renewed heart; and so the sifting, the trial, was indispensable to the severance of the false from the true. Even now, prone as men are to overestimate the importance of the times in which they live, we surely do not err in saying that trials are besetting our Redeemer's church. We need not fear the issue, but the time is momentous. Our religion has stood too long to be overthrown. It has been proved in deathbeds, and martyrdoms, and holy lives, to be a living thing; and it has above all in the life of its Author and Finisher -- so divinely human, so spotless, yet so sympathizing -- an evidence for its truth which cannot be weakened. We cannot tell what

the “end will be” -- perhaps a closer union of Christians, a subordination of things subordinate for the sake of the higher verities of faith and life: but let us endure to the end, and *we* shall be saved, and shall also strengthen many brethren. There are times when one is ready to despair: for are there not hundreds of thousands living and dying among us, as though the gospel had never been preached; and then, is there not closing around us from without, infidelity, heathenism, and all false doctrine. Where, oh where, is the promise of His coming? Where is the church earnest without bigotry, strong without arrogance, sound in faith without being inert in work? As we thus think and question the Lord says to us, Hope on; I am King; endure to the end.”

III. But we must never forget that there are some whose troubles only end with their life, and therefore we are glad to find in these words of our blessed Lord ample encouragement to *endure to the end of life*. “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” A few more years and it will all be over, all our present difficulties, fears, and pains: can we not bear up to the end? Were we children, the term of this endurance would not be more than threescore and ten years; to those who have already live a great part of their life it must be much less. We persevere in seeking some temporal gain, and why should we be daunted when we strive for an incorruptible crown? How comes it that we ever look back on broken hopes and violated vows and good intentions foully cast away? How comes it that many a life is blighted almost at the last by an



awful and disgraceful sin? How, but because the Chrsian forgot to endure unto the end!

Yet it needs not that we prove all endurance vain which is ended before the end. As the tree falleth, so must it lie. The crash has broken its boughs, and marred its symmetry, and it will never be spread in it beauteous pride again. Will it avail a hoary reprobate in his dying hour, that he had a loving childhood and an honourable youth? Will it avail any hardened sinner that he once had a tender conscience, and offered many a prayer? He may plead that he resisted many a temptation, avoided many a snare, before he was overcome, and sank deeper and deeper into ruin. But, as a tried and conquering saint, he had won fresh strength with every victory, and it was tenfold shame in him to cast away his dented shield, and tread in the dust the glory which it had cost him so much toil to win!

Therefore, let us pass the time of our sojourning here in fear; for to us this injunction comes with an infinite depth of meaning. Like a voice from eternity, it solemnly calls us to be constant and consistent to the end. Many a prayer we may have offered, have fought many a hard fight; and now, by all our struggles, by all our hard-won victories, let us be adjured not to throw away the pains of that earnest past, but be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. We are often doubtless tempted to abandon the long struggle, to let our hopes of religion go, and to enjoy the pleasures of sin. We are tempted by the thousand powers and passions of our being to indulge them for a little while, and then to retrieve and retrace and come back to

God. Youth cries, "I will rejoice in my gladness, but be sure that ere I die I shall reform." Health cries, "I will enjoy my days while life is strong, but when feebleness comes, I shall amend my ways;" and so they will endure *at* the end. Ay, at the end, when the power of endurance is gone, when the Spirit has ceased to strive and strengthen, when conscience has been long dead, and faith knows not how to begin; *then* will they endure? Away, away, with this bootless hoping; let us have our eye forecast to the blessed inheritance; call its glorious grandeur into view, and we shall find how all temptations lose their charm, as the sickly lamp grows dim in the sunlight.

Think of the glorious promises. If we overcome, we shall not be "hurt by the second death;" we shall "eat of the hidden manna;" a perpetual dawn of increasing gladness shall be ours, for we shall "receive the morning star." Higher still rises the prophetic vision: we shall be "clothed in white raiment," we shall be "made a pillar in the temple of my God," we shall sit with Christ upon his throne." Therefore, when our faith falters and our courage fails, let us look up, look onwards, to those rewards -- to the white robe and the throne of glory. We cannot tell what those wants and weaknesses are which most beset others -- they are between God and their own hearts; but this applies to all, "Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord."

How needful to have an aim in life, whereof the end in death shall be reward! Some lives death digs across; to some it continues the path through a new portal. It is

terrible to think that, in some men's life, death means horror and woe. There is comfort in my text for the single-minded faithful Christian, of whose enemies death is the last, and for whom beyond death is rest and rich reward: but there is warning for those whose schemes death can only thwart and ruin and destroy. Behold an immortal being striving for riches, heaping them up, enduring labour and care, enduring to the end; but "the end" will strip him of all, and send him naked to the earth. There is another, toiling for influence and power, making himself useful, sparing no pains, enduring to the end; and "the end" will spoil him of his winnings, and summon him to another bar, where the earthly name has no power to charm. There is another indulging self -- happy and careless; and "the end" comes as winter to the chirping grasshopper, as ice on the flowerets bloom -- the end is ruin. Oh! when life, death, and eternity, are but links in one chain, to have such a life that death, the great destroyer, shall complete it, and eternity continue its power! We may well call death the end, because of the final results which it begins; but if we are Christ's it is at once a continuation and a better beginning of our life and work. Be ours such aims as shall be attained in the brighter world beyond the grave. Be ours such projects that the broken threads shall be taken up, and the baffled string led on to glorious consummation, and the dear desires made radiant with immortality of satisfaction!

"The end!" yes, thank God! *there is* an end to all this feebleness and error, and sin and shortcoming, and doubt and fear. Thank God we can believe that death is the end of

all temptation and fall and remorse; that it is the end of the darkness which cripples even our faith and hope; that it is sight and knowledge ; that we shall “see Him as He is,” and “know as we are known.” Which of us has not times of eager questioning, when we find it harder to know the path of duty than even to follow it when known; or when we look back on some important step in life, and wonder whether it were right, whether present difficulties be not God’s teaching by consequences that we then did wrong; and who does not thank God for the *end* that shall come, the end of error and discipline, and uncertain seeking for light -- the fulness of rest, and peace, and joy, in the redeeming Lord?

How and when that end will come to us, we do not know. “Of that day and that hour knoweth no man.” yea, we scarcely know from what, to what, we shall go. We shall be “saved,” but we have not been told many things we should have liked to know regarding our future state. We know not much more than this, that we shall be “with Christ.” More He has not told us meanwhile; but He came, the blessed One, among us that we might know Him and trust Him; and we know that our future is the end for which He lived and died, and which He secured. It is to die in ourselves, to live in Him; it is to be with Him where He is; that is almost all we know, but it is enough. As for the early Christians, so for us -- the end is the “coming of the Lord,” and we may be glad.

Shall I accomplish anything before I die? Shall I do any good to others for God’s good cause? If there be in us the living seed it must grow, it will grow, though we should

never see it; for no good thought, word, or deed, can be lost -- can drop out from the web of God's purposes.

To you, O young men, I call the most, just because the end to you seems so far off. It is worth the pains and peril and toil, this glorious end. Come ye over to the Lord's side. You are the hopes of the future, the "trustees of posterity;" if ye be true to Him who calls you, to your own souls, words cannot tell the glory which is in store for you, for the country, for the church of Christ. We ask you in His great name to make your solemn covenant, to come to Him in His house and among His people, to be His in your daily walk and work, and be assured that in the end ye shall reap if ye faint not. To a life of self-denial and self-conquest -- to willing, strong work in the service of the Lord -- we call you. Consider Him, and be not wearied nor faint in your minds. Consider Him in the mountain, on the roads, in the garden, on the cross. Consider Him on the throne, with the crown and the glory; and be on His side against a world if need be -- "enduring to the end, that ye may be saved."

-- A. H. CHARTERIS, D. D.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

### THE GARDEN.

WHEN Jesus said at the supper table, Rise, let us go from this place, I think that he left the upper room, along with his disciples, and went outside of the city on his way to the garden of Gethsemane. But if so, he must have spoken a somewhat long discourse to his disciples under the open sky, and also must have prayed the wonderful prayer to his Father which John has written down. Many think, therefore, that Jesus and his disciples did not leave at once when he said, Let us go, but only rose from the table, and began to get ready. It is a thing we cannot be sure about; but I like rather to think of that sweet talk about the vine and its branches, and about the coming of the Comforter, and what He would do, as held in the open air, while the Lord, and his disciples along with him, took road that led down to the brook Cedron, in the bottom of the valley of Jehoshaphat. It seems to me as if the words at the beginning of the seventeenth of John's Gospel are more natural, if we suppose that the prayer which they introduce

was sent up to the Father under no roof but the skies. They read thus, “these words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father;” and I think I see the Blessed One, with his disciples round, looking up through the clear blue of night as if to see his Father’s throne beyond. I think he would not kneel, but stand; just as John saw the Lamb stand in the midst of the throne: for the prayer is like one up in heaven, and quite different from that in the garden which he offered soon after, when he fell upon the earth, and cried, and wept. But some suppose that the beginning of the eighteenth chapter, which says, “When Jesus had spoken these words he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron,” must mean that he then left the house; and by themselves the words seem to say so. We must allow the question to be a thing which we cannot certainly settle. But whether it was spoken in the house or on the road, very beautiful was the discourse of Jesus to his followers about the vine, and on the duty of loving one another, and concerning the coming of the Holy Ghost. And there is no such other prayer written anywhere as His intercessory prayer, recorded by John.

Saying, however, no more of this, let us go with Jesus in our thoughts out beyond the walls of Jerusalem, and down into the valley which lies between the city and the mount of Olives. He and his eleven disciples came at length to the brook in the bottom, and passed over it. For lying

beyond it, on the skirt of the mount, there was a garden to which Jesus had often gone before, and the place was well known to Judas who was to betray him. When they had come to this spot, and had entered the garden, Jesus said to his disciples, Sit down here, while I go further on to pray. He took three of them, however, with him; the same three -- Peter, James, and John -- that had been with him on the mountain of transfiguration. When they had gone on a little way, he said to them, My soul is very sad; I feel as if ready to die; stay here and watch with me. When he said this there was a dreadful weight of grief and woe on his heart, all on account of our sins. The three disciples, on his bidding them to watch, sat down on the ground, very sorely grieved to see their beloved Master so heavily distressed. Jesus left them, and went forward about as far as a man could throw a stone, and fell on his face on the ground, and “with strong crying and tears” prayed to his Father, saying, O Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not my will, but thine be done. Then he rose up from the ground, and came back to where the three disciples had been left sitting, and instead of watching he found them asleep. Grief and astonishment had made them drowsy. Jesus woke them up, and said, O could you not watch with me one hour? He spoke particularly to Peter, who had been so bold in saying he would go with Christ even to the death. He said, Simon, sleepest thou? Then he bade them all rise



and pray, and watch against entering into temptation. He told them it was a fearful battle that temptation brings; for however willing the spirit might be, the body was weak. At that time he was himself made to know how dreadful temptation is; for Satan was doing all he could to get him to sin, and he had to fight like one in an agony. So he went away again, and prayed yet more earnestly to his Father. He said, Abba, Father, all things are possible to thee; take this cup from me: but if it may not pass from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. When he came back to his disciples, he found them sleeping again, and woke them, and spoke to them, and they did not know what to say for themselves. So, still full of woe, he went a third time to the place where he had prayed, and once more cried unto his Father, using the same words. All this while his anguish was so terrible, that his sweat drops were like great clots of blood falling to the ground. You wonder, perhaps, that God the Father did not take the cup away. Ah! that was because of his love to sinners, and his desire to save them. But though the cup was not to pass, the Father was not shutting his ear against the Sufferer's prayer. He sent an angel down to relieve and strengthen him. At length the agony was over, and Jesus came back to where he left Peter and James and John, to find them once more asleep. This time, as he woke them, he said he would not need their watch any more. His awful sorrow was lightened, and, so far as that

went, they might now sleep on, and take their rest. But he went on to tell them that the traitor was at hand, and asked them to rise and go with him to meet him.

Immediately on Jesus saying this, there appeared a great band of persons led by Judas, and about to enter the garden. They carried lanterns and torches, and were armed with staves and swords. The chief priests had sent them out to take Jesus prisoner. The Lord knew well what they had come for; and going forward to meet them, he said, Whom are you seeking? And when they answered, Jesus of Nazareth, he said, I am he. No sooner had he uttered the words, than they all went backwards and fell to the ground, showing how powerless they were against Christ, and how impossible it would have been for them to take him unless he pleased. When they had recovered themselves, he asked them again whom they were seeking, and said, If you want me, let my disciples go their way. Their own plan for finding out who was Jesus was not now at all needed, seeing he was thus ready to tell them who he was. But they went on with it, and it showed how wicked Judas was; for he had given them a sign, and had said, The person whom I shall kiss is the man you want; take him and hold him fast. So the false and cruel disciple stepped up to Jesus, and kissed him as a friend, and said, Hail, master? Jesus said to him, Friend, why are you come? Are you betraying the Son of man with a kiss? On that Peter drew a sword that he had

(there were two swords in all the disciple's hands), and rushed on, and struck a blow at one of the party, who happened to be the high priest's servant. Perhaps he was the most forward to lay hands on Jesus, and therefore Peter struck at him. The blow was not useless; it cut off the man's right ear. But Jesus would not let his followers fight for him. He said to Peter, Put your sword into its sheath. Do you think I need it? I have only to ask my Father, and he would send me in a moment legions of angels. But then how would the scriptures be fulfilled, which say that I must suffer? The cup that my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? Do not interfere. Then he touched the wounded ear of the high priest's servant, and healed it in a moment. He then allowed the men to take and bind him, saying to them, however, What need was there to come in this way to take me like a thief? I was every day with you teaching in the temple; might you not have taken me there? yet ye did not lay hands on me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness. One wonders how with all this being done and said, they could go on arresting him; but the heart of man is very blind and hard.

When the disciples saw Jesus yielding himself up to his enemies, and being led away bound to the high priest's house, they were seized with fear, and all fled as for their lives. The Shepherd was taken, and the sheep were scattered. John and Peter, however, after a time followed

him, and John being known to the high priest, was allowed to go into the house, and took in Peter also. There it was that this bold apostle was to deny his Lord.

-----

## QUESTIONS FROM THE BIBLE STORY.

1. What well-known and long discourse did Jesus speak to a crowd in the open air, and in sight of many things to which he alludes?
2. In what psalm is the church spoken of under the figure of a vine?
3. Where do we read of Jesus praying beside a river, and under the open sky?
4. What is the name of a brook mentioned in the Old Testament, by the bank of which there was a wrestling prayer offered by one who was in distress?
5. What passage in one of the Epistles appears to refer to Christ's agony in the garden?
6. How long was the battle of temptation which Jesus fought with Satan at the beginning of his public life?
7. When was Jesus waked from his sleep by his disciples?
8. What prophet was waked from sleep with words of reproof?

9. What apostle prayed three times to the Lord about an affliction he had?

10. When did an angel wake a sleeping prophet to refresh and strengthen him?

11. When did Christ show his power over his enemies by walking unhurt through the midst of them as they were going to cast him down from a high rock?

12. Can you find a prophecy in the Old Testament about smiting the Shepherd and scattering the sheep?

13. In what psalms have we prophecies about Judas the traitor?

ANSWERS to the questions may be found by turning to the following chapters. -- Matt. v., vi., vii.; Ps. lxxx.; Luke iii.; Gen. xxxii.; Heb. v.; Matt. iv.; Matt. viii.; Jonah i; 2 Cor. xii.; 1 Kings xix.; Luke iv.; Zech. xiii.; Ps. xli.; lv., and cix.

-----

### *Prayer.*

O GOD, give us thy Spirit that we may be led to wonder and praise, when we think of all that Jesus suffered for us poor lost sinners. Help us to learn the lessons which the sorrows and tears of Jesus teach us. Help us to thank Thee for His knowledge of what it is to suffer, and for His

sympathy with us in our sufferings. We rejoice that we have a High Priest who is touched with a feeling of our infirmities. May we be inclined to carry all our burdens to Him, to tell Him all our griefs. O help us to watch against temptation. Keep us from being overcome by it. Do not let us be found sleeping when the Lord shall come. Suffer us not to incur the guilt of denying the Lord who bought us. Preserve us from falling away when following after Him. May His Spirit stablish, strengthen, and settle us, that we may be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. And when our time on earth is done, may we, with those who have waited and wrought for Jesus, receive that crown of glory which fadeth not away. To Thee, Father, be glory for ever, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. *Amen.*

-----

## THE EVENING SERVICE.

O LORD, whose eyes are over the righteous, and Thine ears open to their prayers, we most humbly beseech Thee to make us all of one mind, having compassion one of another, loving as brethren, being pitiful and courteous, eschewing all evil in word and deed, doing good, and seeking peace with all men, so that we may attain that peace which passeth all understanding through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
*Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm lxxiii.* 23-26.

GREAT God, who, hid from mortal sight,  
Dost dwell in unapproached light,  
Before whose presence angels bow  
With faces veiled, in homage low;

Awhile in darkness we remain,  
And round us yet are sin and pain;  
But soon the everlasting day  
Shall chase our shades of night away.

For thou hast promised, gracious Lord,  
A day of gladness and reward;  
A day but faintly imaged here  
By brightest sun at noontide clear.

Great Trinity, our hearts prepare,  
The fulness of thy joy to share;  
Life's transient light may we improve,  
And gain eternal light above.

LUKE XXIV. 13-53.

AND, behold, two of them went the same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. 14. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. 15. And it came to pass, that, while they communed together, and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. 16. But their eyes were holden that they should not know him. 17. And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad? 18. And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering, said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? 19. And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto



him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people; 20. And how the chief priest and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. 21. But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and besides all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done. 22. Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre; 23. And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said he was alive. 24. And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said; but him they saw not. 25. Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? 27. And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. 28. And they drew nigh unto the village whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further. 29. But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them. 30. And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. 31. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. 32. And they said one to

another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures? 33. And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were there with them, 34. Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. 35. And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread, &c.

*Prayer.*

O LORD of Hosts, God of Israel, Thou art God, even Thou alone; Thou hast made the heavens and earth. Incline Thine ear, O God and hear; open Thine eyes, O God, and see.

We worship and we bow down, we kneel before the Lord our Maker. There is nothing hid from Him with whom we have to do, and we seek to come before Thee as we are. This day have we been privileged to look upon Thy glory in Thy word, and in Thy Son the Word made flesh: and as we think of all Thy majesty of holiness, and remember all the shamefulfulness of our sin; as we think of the wonders of Thy love, and remember the blackness of our ingratitude -- the

cry of our hearts is, Woe unto us for we are undone; God be merciful unto us sinners! We render Thee thanks for all Thy tender mercies to us-ward. For life and health, for food and raiment, for our reason which Thou hast given to guide our bodies, for our conscience which has been appointed to testify of Thee in our souls, for our hope, that riseth above all things seen and temporal , for our friendships and our social intercourse, for our employments and their rewards for the days of work and sabbath days, for the sanctuaries of thy worship and the sacraments of our most holy faith; we render Thee thanks, O Lord most merciful.

We thank Thee especially for the unspeakable gift of Thy Son, our Saviour; in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. Give us grace to use the means of grace, and to hold the hope of glory as we ought. Lead Thou our captivity captive, and give us of Thy gifts received for men, that we may walk in light as children of light, and bear no longer the bondage of our sins.

May the rest and worship of this day be abundantly blessed unto us, and unto all men. May all penitence that has been awakened, and all vows of amendment that have been made, be strengthened and bear good fruit in the days that are to come. Save thy listening people from the sin of selfish enjoyment of Thy gospel, and from unconcern as to the souls of others. Strengthen our fearful hearts; guide all

who are in bewilderment to the cross of Thy Son; and those who are sunk in despair be pleased to lift up to the peace of Thine own love. In the house and in the field, in the church and in their daily life, may Thy professing people show that they have their conversation heaven.

Greatly prosper everywhere the cause which is Thine own: extend the church of Thy Son throughout the whole world: and be pleased to reform more and more the churches of the Reformation. We beseech thee to make our native land a habitation of righteousness and charity and true liberty, and greatly to bless and long to preserve Thy servant our Queen. Let the people praise Thee, O Lord; let all the people praise Thee, O Lord.

These our prayers we offer through Him who has taught us to say, Our Father, &c. *Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

#### *Morning.*

**Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.**

Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth.

Heb. xiii. 13. Tit. ii. 14. 2 Pet. i. 11, 12.

#### *Evening.*

**O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord.**

See that ye refuse not him that speaketh; for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much

more shall not we have escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven;

Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.

And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made that those things that are shaken, as of things that are made that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.

Jer. xxii. 29. Heb. xii. 25, 26, 27.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruit of his creatures.**

The first-born of thy sons shalt thou give unto me.

And ye shall be holy men unto me.

For if the first-fruit be holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches.

And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, yet grafted in among them, and with them partest of the root and fatness of the olive tree;

Boast not against the branches; but if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.

James i. 18. Exod. xxii. 29, 31. Rom. xi. 16, 17. 18.

*Evening.*

**Return, O Lord, how long? And let it repent thee concerning thy servants.**

Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me.

I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me; he will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness.

There be many that say, Who will shew us any good? Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.

I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, makest me to dwell in safety.

Ps. xc. 13. Micah vii. 8, 9. Ps. iv. 6, 8.

## WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love; he will joy over thee with singing.**

Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict thee; and I will save her that halteth, and gather her that was driven

out; and I will get them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame.

At that time I will bring you again, even in the time that I gather you; for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the Lord.

Zeph. iii. 17, 19, 20.

*Evening.*

**In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping: they shall go, and seek the Lord their God.**

They shall ask the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten.

My people hath been lost sheep; their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have turned them away on the mountains; they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their resting-place.

And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation.

Jer. l. 4, 5, 6. Ps. cvii. 7.

**THURSDAY.**



*Morning.*

**Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord,  
and teachest him out of thy law;**

That thou mayest give him rest from the days of  
adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked.

For the Lord will not cast off his people, neither will he  
forsake his inheritance:

But judgment shall return unto righteousness; and all  
the upright in heart shall follow it.

My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither  
be weary of his correction:

For whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, even as a  
father the son in whom he delighteth.

Ps. xciv. 12, 13, 14, 15. Prov. iii. 11, 12.

*Evening.*

**Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest  
Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest between the  
cherubims, shine forth.**

Before Ephraim, and Benjamin, and Manasseh, stir up  
thy strength, and come and save us.

Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to shine; and  
we shall be saved.

The Lord God of hosts, how long wilt thou be angry  
against the prayer of thy people?

Thou feedest them with the bread of tears; and givest them tears to drink in great measure.

Turn us again, O God of hosts, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

Ps. lxxx. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7.

## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**O Lord to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee.**

To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him.

O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name: for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses but for thy great mercies.

O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name.

Dan. ix. 8, 9, 18, 19.

*Evening.*

**Save me, O God; for the waters are come unto my soul.**

I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing; I am come unto deep waters, where the floods overflow me.

I am weary of my crying; my throat is dried; mine eyes fail while I wait for my God.

But as for me, my prayer is unto thee, O Lord, in an acceptable time; O God, in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, in the truth of thy salvation.

Let not the water-flood overflow me, neither let the deep swallow me up, and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me.

Hear me, O Lord; for thy loving-kindness is good: turn unto me according to the multitude of thy tender mercies.

Ps. lxix. 1, 2, 3, 13, 15, 16.

## **SATURDAY.**

*Morning.*

**I am afraid of all my sorrows, I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent.**

If I be wicked, why then labour I in vain?

If I wash myself with snow-water, and make my hands never so clean;

Yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me.

Neither is there any day's-man betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both.

I the Lord am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob.

Job ix. 28, 29, 30, 31, 33. Isa. xlix. 28.

*Evening.*

**Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord.**

Be strong, and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the Lord thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

But cleave unto the Lord your God, as ye have done unto this day.

One man of you shall chase a thousand: for the Lord your God, he it is that fighteth for you, as he hath promised you.

Ps. xxvii. 14. Deut. xxxi. 6. Josh. xxiii. 8, 10.

# HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

## FIFTIETH WEEK.

### MORNING WORSHIP.

FATHER of lights, and God of all mercies and consolations, grant us now to receive of Thy illuminating and sustaining grace, through Thy Spirit imparted to us, that we may serve Thee with sincere and humble hearts, and may intelligently adore Thy glorious majesty, and be prepared to go from the scene of domestic worship and instruction strengthened for all the duties of the day, through the all-sufficiency that is in Jesus Christ Thy Son, our Lord, to whom be praise for ever. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm xxxvii.* 3-7.

LORD, when we bend before thy throne,  
And our confessions pour,  
Teach us to feel the sins we own,  
And hate what we deplore.

Our broken spirit pitying see;  
True penitence impart;  
Then let a kindling glance from Thee  
Beam hope upon the heart.

When we disclose our wants in prayer,  
May we our wills resign;  
And not a thought our bosoms share,  
Which is not wholly thine.

May faith each weak petition fill,  
And waft it to the skies,  
And teach our hearts 'tis goodness still  
That grants it or denies.

### JEREMIAH I. 19.

THE words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the priests that were in Anathoth, in the land of Benjamin: 2. To whom the word of the Lord came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign. 3. It came also in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah the son of Josiah, king of Judah, unto the carrying away of

Jerusalem captive in the fifth month. 4. Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, 5. Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. 6. Then said I, Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak, for I am a child. 7. But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. 8. Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord. 9. Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth: and the Lord said unto me, Behold I have put my words in thy mouth. 10. See, I have this day set thee over the nations, and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant. 11. Moreover, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Jeremiah, what seest thou? And I said, I see a rod of an almond-tree. 12. Then said the Lord unto me, Thou hast well seen: for I will hasten my word to perform it. 13. And the word of the Lord came unto me the second time, saying, What seest thou? And I said, I see a seething-pot; and the face thereof is toward the north. 14. Then the Lord said unto me, Out of the north an evil shall break forth upon all the inhabitants of the land. 15. For, lo, I will call all the families of the kingdoms of the north, saith the Lord; and they shall come, and they shall set every one his throne at the entering of the gates of

Jerusalem, and against all the cities of Judah. 16. And I will utter my judgments against them touching all their wickedness, who have forsaken me, and have burnt incense unto other gods, and worshipped the works of their own hands. 17. Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them. 18. For, behold, I have made thee this day a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brasen walls against the whole land; against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land. 19. And they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee.

*Prayer.*

O LORD of all goodness and grace, we praise Thee for the return of morning, and the renewed sweetness of its springing light. For what repose and refreshment Thou hast granted us in sleep, and for every good and right thought awaked in our minds, we give Thee hearty thanks. We come to Thee, first of all, thus spared to enter on another sabbath, that we may go out from Thy presence strong and cheerful, to enjoy the privileges and engage in



the duties of Thy holy day, and to perform them heartily. We thank Thee that we have such duties to fulfil; let them not press upon us or be regarded by us as a burden grievous to be borne, but may the doing of them be the joy and the rejoicing of our hearts. We commit ourselves to Thy benediction, and pray to find that our performance of duty, as under Thine eye, serves to keep us near Thyself. In the work and warfare of our souls may we lean specially upon Thy help. Let us, in the trials and tests that prove us, be kept faithful, and made victorious. Guard our lips, guide our steps, keep our hearts. Help us, in our intercourse with our fellow creatures, to be blameless and useful, getting and doing good. Give us opportunity of promoting the happiness of others, and aid us wisely and kindly to embrace it. Restrain the adversaries of our souls, and let them not have advantage against us. Help us to live this day, and always, soberly, righteously, and godly, in a present evil world. May our eyes be fixed on the great and good Master, and may we ever strive to walk in the steps of His example, having the same mind in us that was also in Christ Jesus. May the love of the Saviour surround and bless our family circle to-day endearing the bonds of affection that unite us, preventing any root of bitterness from springing up among us, and sweetening our domestic joys. May the same love bless all the homes of our friends. In any of these where affliction or death has entered, be thou our God near as the

comforter and friend. Hush timid and fearing hearts, guide perplexed and anxious spirits, lead inquirers to Jesus. Prosper, O Lord, this Thine own work of gathering souls to Jesus. May it advance to-day in our own and other lands; the kingdom of light widening, and the reign of darkness retiring before the shining of truth and love. We commend to Thee our country, our beloved queen, and all the members of the royal house. We pray for universal peace among the nations. We rejoice to think of the time when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ. May it be hastened on apace. Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven. Hear us, O Father, in these our morning supplications; and when the day declines, let us again meet around Thy footstool, with renewed thanksgiving for all Thy goodness to us, and in a spirit of fervent supplication that thou who hast hitherto been mindful of us wouldst bless us still, through Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O LORD of life, send down on us Thy quickening and sanctifying Spirit that being this day among the risen with Christ we may sit with Him in heavenly places. May our worship and meditation nurture in us the diviine life, through the operation of the Spirit of Jesus, dwelling in us. And may the discipline of Thy hand combine with the gifts of Thy grace to raise us higher and higher towards Thyself, till we come to dwell in Thy presence where there is fulness of joy for ever. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* l. 3-6.

WHEN the last trumpet's awful voice  
This rending earth shall shake,  
When op'ning graves shall yield their charge,  
And dust to life awake;

These bodies, that corrupted fell,  
Shall incorrupted rise;  
And mortal forms shall spring to life  
Immortal in the skies.

Behold, what heaven-taught prophets sung  
Is now at length fulfill'd,  
That death should yield his ancient reign,  
And, vanquish'd, quit the field!

Let Faith exalt her joyful voice  
And thus begin to sing,  
O Grave, where is thy triumph now?  
And where, O Death, thy sting?

JOB XIX. 8-27.

HE hath fenced up my way that I cannot pass, and he hath set darkness in my paths. 9. He hath stripped me of my glory, and taken crown from my head. 10 He hath destroyed me on every side, and I am gone; and mine hope hath he removed like a tree. 11. He hath also kindled his wrath against me, and he counteth me unto him as one of his enemies. 12. His troops come together, and raise up their way against me, and encamp round about my tabernacle. 13. He hath put my brethren far from me, and mine acquaintance are verily estranged from me. 14. My kinsfolk have failed, and my familiar friends have forgotten me. 15. They that dwell in mine house, and my maids, count

me for a stranger: I am an alien in their sight. 16. I called my servant, and he gave me no answer; I entreated him with my mouth. 17. My breath is strange to my wife, though I entreated for the children's sake of mine own body. 18. Yea, young children despised me; I arose, and they spake against me. 19. All my inward friends abhorred me; and they whom I loved are turned against me. 20. My bone cleaveth to my skin and to my flesh, and I am escaped with the skin of my teeth. 21. Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me. 22. Why do ye persecute me as God, and are not satisfied with my flesh? 23. Oh that my words were now written! Oh! that they were printed in a book! 24. That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever! 25. For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. 26. And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: 27. Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.

## 1 CORINTHIANS XV. 35-59.

BUT some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? 36. Thou fool, that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: 38. But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body. 39. All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and other of birds. 40. There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. 41. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory. 42. So also is the resurrection of the dead; it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption: 43. It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power: 44. It is sown in a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. 45. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. 46. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. 47. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. 48. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are

heavenly. 49. And as we have borne the image of the heavenly. 50. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. 51. Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, &c.

-----

## SERMON L.

“THY DEAD MEN SHALL LIVE; TOGETHER WITH MY DEAD BODY SHALL THEY ARISE. AWAKE AND SING, YE THAT DWELL IN DUST; FOR THY DEW IS AS THE DEW OF HERBS, AND THE EARTH SHALL CAST OUT THE DEAD. --- Isaiah xxvi. 19.

THESE words are often quoted as a prediction of the final resurrection of the bodies of the saints; and as such we purpose mainly to consider them. But it is to be noted that, in their immediate and direct application, this is not their meaning. They are a prophecy of the revival, restoration, and glory of the church, in figurative language, borrowed from the resurrection of the dead. In the previous verses the depression, suffering, and disappointments of the church are lamented; trouble and anguish had come upon her, and her arm had become feeble in her warfare with evil in the

earth. Her sons were like the scattered remnant of some patriotic host hidden in caves and dells, dispirited, out of sight; living only to lament the oppression of their country, while unable to turn the battle to the gates. They were even as the dead. But now they are comforted with the assurance that this death-like state shall be succeeded by resuscitation and joy; the dry bones shall live, the withered hopes of the house of Israel shall be revived, and the church arise as from the grave to power and honour.

But though this is the immediate application of the words, they are by no means referred to the literal resurrection inaptly; nor, in considering them as so applied, are we guilty of using a test by way of mere accommodation. For two reasons: First, because as in every case of figure, the reality of the object from which the figure is taken is necessarily understood, and underlies the metaphor. If there were no sun in the skies, Jesus could with no propriety be called the Sun of Righteousness; if there were no dew of herbs, the word would convey no meaning, as applied to the Spirit of God. So, if there were no literal resurrection, we might say to an unconverted man, or a decayed church, Awake thou that sleepest; but we could not add, with Paul, Arise from the dead. Nor could the prophet have been understood -- at least his language would have been inapt as a prophecy of returning prosperity to the church - if the living of dead men were an



impossibility, or, we may add, a thing unlooked for, un hoped for, unknown to faith. But there is a deeper reason than this by which the use we mean to make of the text to-day is to be vindicated. Not only is the resurrection here presumed in the figure employed but that figure has its great force from this circumstance, that all previous communications of life to the church are foreshowings of, steps towards, nay, quickenings included in, the ultimate outbursting of perfect life in the world to come. They are not completed till they are all carried forward and gathered up into resurrection glory. The plant has not lived till the blade and ear are educated into the full corn. The prophecy of revival here stands to the final redemption of the body, as the hill top, illumed at dawn, does to the sun -- it shines in the sun's light, and it shows his coming. So this prediction borrow its gladness for the near relief, from the advancing joy of the final release. Nay, the connection is closer; it is a part of the one grand release of which the resurrection that supplies words to describe it is the consummation. "Thy dead men shall live" are the words having a current fulfilment in the whole history of salvation. As when from some lofty height you survey a wide landscape, and see first at your feet a little bend of water sparkling in the sun, then further off a broader belt flashing out into the light, then remoter still a wider sheet gleaming and glittering afar, till on the very horizon the great sea comes in to meet the gaze;

and are told that all these views are but different parts of the same noble river, losing itself at length in the ocean: so with Isaiah we stand on this height of prophecy, and see at our feet the captivity of Babylon brought back -- the introduction of the gospel age -- the coming in of millennial prosperity, and the creation of a new heavens and a new earth for the eternal abode of righteousness -- and say of all "Thy dead shall live." They are all but conspicuous turnings in the one great river of life, whose close is resurrection and immortality. That close out there on the horizon of Christian hope, far out in the ocean of eternity, we shall to-day begin with, though ere we close we shall show how the outflow of the river into the sea implies its living progress at every point of its course.

A sentence of two must be premised about the structure and phraseology of the text. To whom are the words addressed? To God or to the people of God? I confess I have found difficulty in reaching grounds for a settled conclusion. Most interpreters, I think, regard them as spoken to God -- and very beautiful are the thoughts which so viewed the words suggest. For example, what an affecting and delightful vista to meditation is opened up by the expression, God's dead! Not the dead, nor our dead, but God's dead. But perhaps God, the Saviour-God, may be viewed rather as the speaker here, comforting the weeping church with word of promise -- even as the sun breaks

through the dark rain-clouds, and spans the falling shower with God's bow. I can more easily in this way explain the expression, "my dead body." Moreover, the phrase, "thy dew," is more naturally referred to the church than to God, especially as compared with the dew of herbs; that is, "thy dew," in the connection, is better understood as the dew thou hast, than as the dew thou givest. And finally, if we so view the text, there is no change of person in the verse following, where the people of God are expressly addressed. I shall therefore regard the words as Emmanuel's, without very positively affirming the certainty of the interpretation; but adding this consideration, that the undoubted settlement of the reference is of the less moment, that preference of either view simply affects the mode of bringing out the truth, not the truths brought out.

Thus premised, I proceed to ask your attention to two things regarding the resurrection of the saints -- First, *Its certainty*; and secondly, *Its glory*.

I. *Its certainty*. -- And here the first thought is, that it is *predicted*. The Lord of life, who gave being at first to all, has said, "Thy dead men shall live." That is enough. It settles all objections -- silences all unbelieving cavils. He has said it, and shall he not bring it to pass? "Is there anything too hard for the Lord," that this should exceed his power? Is he a man that he should lie, or the son of man that he should repent," and so fail in his promise? However

unlikely seems the resurrection of the dead, however great and strange a work it seems, it is sure. “Why should it be deemed a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?”

Some glimpse of this must have been shown to Adam himself when, in connection with the promise of her conquering seed, he named his wife Eve (the living); some notion, at least of life, in spite of the return to dust he knew to be before him, and saw first in his martyred Abel. Later saints must have seen it also afar off, when they gave commandment concerning their bones, and hoped in death to be gathered to their people. Job anticipated it with remarkable clearness of faith and hope. David foresaw it in the person of the Messiah. Isaiah here accepts and applies it. Daniel declares it in express terms. But while these revelations of the doctrine in ancient times were sufficient, as appears from the gospel narratives, to produce a general belief of the doctrine among the Jews, it is in the New Testament that the fullest, most express, and clearest predictions of the resurrection occur. I need not cite our Lord’s own words, nor Paul’s nor John’s. If there be anything plainly taught in the New Testament, it is the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. Here, then, we may rest. It is promised. It is sure. If, when Adam first beheld sunset, there came over his heart a momentary misgiving that he had seen the last of the great luminary

now sunk from sight, God's promise of a morrow would be enough to reassure him, though he was not told how the sun could reach the east again; and when he first sowed seed in his field, he must have rested on God's word that it would grow. So may we rest in hope concerning our dead.

The New Testament, however, not only gives us the plainest words of promise, but the additional assurance of accomplished fact. The promise is *certified* and *sealed*. The second clause of the text suggests this thought -- "My dead body they shall arise." Our version says, "together with;" a simpler supplement would be "like" or "as," just as in a subsequent clause, "as the dew of herbs." Read thus we have the attestation of Christ's resurrection superadded to the assurance of promise. We see life restored, the slain revived. When the dead body of our Lord lay in the grave, the disciples sorrowed with no common grief. Mournfully reverting to the fact that they had trusted this had been he who should have redeemed Israel, they might express their plaint in the words of the prophet, "We have, as it were, brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth, neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen." But when he appeared to them risen -- his dead body alive again, as he said -- all despair as to the resuscitation of the church in her lowest states was chased away. Foreseen, this fact forbade despondency; remembered, still more. Go see the place where the Lord lay, and despair no more, not

even of the dust in the grave. Look where his dead body was, and say, "They shall arise."

If, however, Christ's resurrection were but an illustrious example of the dead quickened, it would not stand single as an encouragement -- those he raised from death were examples too; nor would it avail to meet such desponding thoughts as might rest on the consideration that our dead are not only lifeless, but turned into corruption and dust. But Christ was a representative, a head man. If he got life, he got it for all his people too. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." The dead bodies of believers are in fact his dead, his property, his purchased recompense. He cannot leave them in the grave. Nay, they are not only his purchase, but a part of his mystical self. The church is his body. He then, himself glorified, can no more rest satisfied with this, nor with the spirits of his just ones around him than his soul entered into paradise could rest satisfied while its partner body lay in the tomb of Joseph. Does the church ask, can my dead live? Yea, saith the Spirit for they are Christ's dead -- Christ's corse, shall we say? Look at them; hear him say, "My dead body," and add rejoicing, "They shall arise."

Thus is the resurrection of the saints certified as Christ's body, with Christ's body, being Christ's body.

The text gives us still another view of the certainty of the resurrection, not perhaps, adding to the assurance

produced by promise and seal, but aiding the mind in the reception of the truth, by suggesting analogies, and indicating the power by which the great quickening is to be accomplished. This may we fix in our memory by saying, we have, thirdly, here the resurrection *illustrated*. “Thy dew is as the dew of herbs.” The words direct the eye to a pleasing picture. See that fallen plant, flaccid and withering, how dead and hopeless it seems; but insert its root in the earth, water it with soft showers, or with the night’s dews bathing it again. Or see that corn of wheat cast into the ground, and covered with the soil; what hope is there of its becoming a living thing? Yet wait, and lo, the earth is casting it up from its dark womb, green, vital, beautiful. But ah! you say, is there any dew that can vivify the dust of the buried, or any power that can make the grave yield life from its bosom? There is. Thy dew, dead saint, is as adapted to revive thee as rains to refresh the dried herb -- it is the dew of the Spirit of God. “If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.” The buried are dead bodies; but a living Spirit, omnipotent, omniscient, holds them in his vital embrace: and as certainly as at the word of God there came up from the dry land, on the third creation-day, millions of living plants, so, by the same power, the graveyards and tombs where Christ’s

people lie shall burst into a harvest of immortal men. The seed is but sown in winter, and covered with the clod, to come up fresh and fair in the spring of the eternal year.

We are thus naturally brought to consider --

## II. *The glory of the resurrection.*

This is intimated by the call to awake and sing. The change is such as fitly to evoke praise and triumph. The resurrection may well be followed by a concert of the blessed. If it were only a revival, bringing up the saint to the life he had before, with all the shadows which chequer it, how could lips again opened refrain from singing? But it is something else and more than this. The saint is revived to enter on a new style of life. He leaves infirmity, sorrow, sin, corruptibility, behind him in the grave, like dead-clothes cast aside. He is raised in honour, glory, and power. He is like one risen from sleep, whose fatigues are forgotten, and who bounds forth to the day's enjoyments and duties in the elasticity of reinvigorated strength. Only, never was the deep sleep of healthy youth so refreshing as shall prove the saint's sleep in death. How wearily he lay down in that bed of dust! How impossible to conceive the jubilant swell of that morning,

“Loud as from numbers without number, sweet  
As from blest voices, uttering joy,”



with which the risen saints will first wake the echoes of eternity; filling with new hosannas the ethereal regions. Many glad songs there have been, sung by heavenly and by terrestrial choristers; but never aught like this. It was a glorious burst of harmony which broke on the ear of a young creation “when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy;”

“When heaven and all the constellations rang,  
And planets in their station listening stood.”

Glorious by the sea was the song of Moses, when Miriam and her maidens chanted response, and all the ransomed nation lifted their voice, saying, “Sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.” Glorious was that other angelic song which startled midnight with celestial symphonies, when Jesus was born in the city of David. And magnificent will be the chorus that, filling all heaven with melody, shall welcome the sunrise of millennial day, when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ. But these are all mere preludes to the full song of jubilee, which hails the Lord’s return, and the resurrection of his church. To this all previous joys were but as tributary streams; every anticipatory psalm stretches forward to this final strain of victory. The resurrection-

song, gathering into itself all former sons of gladness -- the psalm of life, now first complete -- shall, like a sea into which ten thousand rivers have flowed, swell up a mighty flood of glory and gladness to the throne of God. And O! to what a feast of immortal joy shall the Eternal Father invite his household, when first, in the full sense, he can say of his poor child Man, now restored in his Divine Head -- "This my son was dead, and is alive again; was lost, and is found."

Thus far we find the glory of the resurrection in the very call to sing a morning song. But it is hinted also in what precedes. Revert again to the expression, "My dead body." What will not the Head do for his own body raised? If he has clad the worlds he made with light and beauty, what shall be the investing robe of those who are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones? Or say, as his own body, and you are reminded of the doctrine that he shall change this vile body, and fashion it, by all-subduing power, like his own body of glory. Inhabited, then, first of all, by purified spirits must the raised bodies of believers be; for a soul with sin-taints in it could not dwell in a body like that of Jesus -- just as a soul pure as Christ's is pure must not inhabit a corruptible frame. We shall be like Christ, seeing him as he is. All conceivable glory for man is here. That which is nearest to God of all created things is the human nature of Emmanuel, and that is the model after which his saints are to be fashioned. No wonder then the

Apostle, with his eye on all this, should write -- “It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.”

The language of the text solemnly calls us to weigh the fact that there are two classes of dead, and that both in the graves and above them. There are God’s dead, and the dead simply. Mark the express contrast between the text and a previous verse -- “They shall not rise.” Not that the mere revivification of the dust of the wicked is denied; but they shall not wake from sleep, nor to song. In the graves are those who are not, and those who are, of Christ’s body, united to him by the living Spirit. For those who are not Christ’s there is no morning dew; if the earth casts forth these her dead, it is not in the form of living plants, but the dead seed it got, corrupt as it fell. The Germans call the churchyard God’s acre. O! Happy those who, burying their dead there, know them to be God’s dead. But in the world of air and light there are also in God’s sight the dead only, divided into two classes. There are those who are dead while they live, who are dead in life: “She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.” There are also those who are living in death: “For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” Dead to the law, dead to sin, dead to the world, but in all this God’s dead; and such shall live.

Their whole course is now a path of life; it is the progress of the life-shoot underground, to break into heavenly air and light on the resurrection-day. In one or other of these senses we are all dead: in which -- are we God's dead, or the world's? In the one case, we are like a winter's bud, with life folded within, and waiting for the spring. In the other, we are like a dead tree covered with creeping ivy -- killed by the very greenness that gives a semblance of life. But there is this difference between the dead above ground and the dead below. The dividing line is fixed in the grave. It is changing above it. God is gathering his own quickened dead from among the world's dead daily. Where he saith -- "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."

And this leads me, in conclusion, back to the point from which we set out -- the application of the final resurrection to the comfort of the church and the soul under trouble. Here is what answers all complaints, such as we find in the verses preceding. Is it the mournful burden of a convinced, distressed, desponding soul, wearing with self-pains that have brought no peace? Does such a one cry out, "It is of no use; there is no hope; my agony, my weeping, my running to and fro, bring no rest; I am as a dead man?" Then be as the dead; lie at Christ's feet -- all self-hopes slain, all self-help foregone. Your hope is this, "Thy dead men shall live." From his dead body get life. Be crucified

with him. Become one with him by faith in his death. You shall arise. Is it the complaint of a saint, in his mortification of sin, that all his wrestling, watching, toiling, come to nothing! “O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death.” Ah! thy dead men shall live. Happy are they who feel sin to be a body of death. They are crucified with Christ. Christ liveth in them. Is it, finally, the complaint of the church, looking at a still unconquered world? It is a great field of the dead. But God’s dead are there; Christ’s body is there. The dew of the Spirit shall fall there; and plants of grace shall spring to clothe the desert. A living breath, like air of spring, shall pass over the world, and a voice of life shall pierce the ear of the dead, saying -- “Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For lo, the winter is past; the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.” “For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth, so the Lord God will cause righteousness to spring forth before all the nations.” -- JOHN EDMOND, D. D.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

### THE ARRAIGNMENT.

THE men that took the Lord Jesus in the garden when he gave himself up to their power, led him away to the house of the high priest. He was first of all, indeed, taken to the father-in-law of the high priest, but after that he was brought to Caiaphas himself. This Caiaphas had some time before given his advice, in the council of the Jews, that Jesus should be killed; and now the meek blessed Saviour was placed before him to be examined and condemned. So the high priest asked him about his disciples and his teaching, and Jesus said, Why do you ask at me? ask those who heard me; for I taught openly, in synagogues, and in the temple. The people know what I said. At this point one of the officers struck Christ on the face with his open hand, and said, Is that the way you speak to the high priest? But the Lord meekly answered, If I have said anything that is wrong, tell me what it is; but if I have said what is true, why do you strike me? How wonderful to think that Jesus should thus yield himself to be smitten by one of his own creatures? How blind was that creature to smite his Saviour-God!

While this was going on in a room of the high priest's palace, something else was happening in the court without. Houses in the East were often built round a square court, or

yard, which had no roof; and the rooms, though walled on the outside and covered above, were often open to the courtyard. You may think of Jesus as being before the high priest, bound as a prisoner, in such a room; while the servants and attendants were outside in the open square. It was a cold night, and they had kindled a fire in the middle of the court, and stood round it to warm themselves. As they were doing this, Peter stepped in among them to warm himself also. It was then that a servant maid saw him, and said to the bystanders, This is one of the followers of Jesus of Nazareth. Peter hearing this, and being afraid, hastened to tell a sad lie: for he said before the whole party, I do not know what you say; I do not know this Jesus you speak about. Having said that, he went away from the fire, out into the passage that led from the street into the house. A number of servants and others shortly gathered there -- among them the maid that had seen him at the fire; and several of them remarked that he surely was one of Christ's disciples. But he denied again that he was a follower of Jesus, and said with an oath, I do not know the man. About an hour after that, when Peter was again in the court, where he must have been able to see Jesus before his wicked judge, several persons came round about him, and made the remark that he must certainly be one of them; his very speech (for he spoke like a Galilean) proving him to belong to the company of the followers of Jesus. But Peter,

getting more and more alarmed, began to curse and swear, and said, I tell you I do not know the man. Thus three distinct times Peter denied his Lord. Just as he did so the third time, the cock was heard to crow; and Jesus, whose face had been looking away from Peter, turned and looked on him. That showed that he knew all that Peter had been doing; and, oh, what a look it must have been which he gave him! Peter could not stand it. His heart smote him. He rushed out of the house, thinking on the warning that Jesus had given him, and of his sin and folly. Outside the house, he sobbed and wept bitterly.

By and by the morning began to dawn, and the whole council gathered themselves together to put Jesus on trial. Witnesses had been sought out to speak against him. They were false witnesses; they perverted words he had spoken, and gave them a wrong meaning, trying to show that he had set himself against what the Jews held sacred. But they did not agree with each other in their accounts. At last two came and said, they had heard him say that he was able to destroy the temple, and build it in three days. Even then, however, they did not quite agree. The high priest observing this, and trying in vain to get Jesus to answer his accusers, put a question to Christ himself. He put it as asking him to answer on oath; he said, I call on you in the name of the living God to tell us whether you really are the Messiah. Jesus, on this, answered, I am; and after this you



will see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Hearing that, up rose Caiaphas and rent his clothes, to show how much he was shocked, and cried, There is no need for any more witnesses; we have heard him blaspheme with our own ears. Then all of them said, Let him die. When the judges said that, it seemed the signal for all around to insult and mock the blessed Lord. Some actually spat in his face. Some struck him with their fists. Some covered his face so as to blindfold him, and then striking him, said, Prophecy to us, and tell us who struck you. The very servants thought themselves free to smite him with the palms of their hands, and cry out against him, as if he had been the vilest of the vile.

After this, when the morning had quite come, the whole crowd of priests and scribes, and elders and attendants, with Jesus bound anew in their midst, went on to the house of the Roman governor, to have him judged, and sentenced to die. The name of the governor was Pontius Pilate. They would not, however, go into the house themselves: for they thought to go into a heathen's house would make them unclean, and prevent their keeping the passover-feast. So they staid outside, and sent Jesus in to the judgment hall. Pilate came out to them, and said, What charge do you bring against this man? They said, We would not have brought him to you, if he had not been a

criminal. They wanted Pilate just to take their word for it, and condemn him to die. The Roman governor said, Well, take him and judge him by your own law. But they said, Our law says he ought to die, and we have not authority to put any man to death; you must do that. It was in this way that Christ's prophecy of what kind of death he should die came to be made good: for if the Jews could have condemned him to death, and carried out the sentence, he would have been stoned, as Stephen afterwards was in a tumult; but the Roman punishment for great malefactors was crucifixion. So you see that a great many things had to be brought about, to make the prophecies true that Jesus should be born in Bethlehem and die upon a tree.

The Jews, seeing that Pilate did not care for offences against their law, tried another plan. They said Jesus was a seditious person, and a rebel against the Roman government; they accused him of calling himself a king, and telling the people not to give tribute to Caesar. Pilate, hearing this, went to Jesus, and said, Art thou the king of the Jews? Jesus told him that he was, but went on to show him that he was not a king like the Roman emperors; that he was a king of hearts that loved the truth, and that he had come into the world to rule men by the truth. Pilate, either perplexed or sneering, said, What is truth? but he went out to the chief priests and people, and said, I find no fault in this man. On that they became more vehement and said, He

is exciting the whole of the people, stirring them up by his teaching all the way from Galilee to this. Is he a Galilean? said Pilate; and having learned that he was, and therefore belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he resolved to send him to Herod, he happening to be then in Jerusalem.

When Jesus was brought before Herod, that prince was extremely glad. He had heard a great deal about Jesus and was anxious to see him. He thought, too, he might get him to work some miracle in his presence. So he put a great many questions to him, but Jesus did not answer him one word. He was not a humble inquirer wishing to learn, or Jesus would have taught him. All this time, the priests and scribes were making bitter charges against him. When Herod found that Jesus would not answer him, he, with all his officers and soldiers, mocked him. They put a gorgeous robe on him as if he were a king, and sent him again to Pilate.

When Jesus was sent back to Pilate, the Roman governor, persuaded that he was innocent of any crime deserving death, tried hard to get the Jews to consent to let him go free. He did this the more that his wife had sent to him, warning him to have nothing to do with that just man, for she had had a very painful dream about him. How he tried to deliver him, but at last gave him up to death, will be told in the next story.

-----

## QUESTIONS FROM THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Where do we find the advice of Caiaphas given to the council to put Jesus to death?
2. What disciple of Jesus was found fault with by those that were near for speaking improperly, as they said, to the high priest?
3. Where do we read of a fire in a winter day, into which a part of sacred scripture was cast?
4. Who was it that told a lie to his father, and brought in God's name profanely in connection with it?
5. Where do we read of Jesus questioning Peter about his love, as many times as Peter denied him?
6. Where is a look at Christ represented as making people weep bitterly?
7. In what psalm is there a prophecy of false witnesses speaking against Christ?
8. What temple did Jesus mean when he spoke of raising it in three days, when the Jews had destroyed it?
9. Who is it that is called the accuser, by way of eminence? Do you know a name he has that means this?
10. Do you remember beautiful words in which Jesus told beforehand what death he would die?

11. Can you find a verse that describes Christ's faultlessness, by using four different words and phrases?

ANSWERS to these questions may be found by turning to the following chapters: -- John xi.; Acts xxiii.; Jer. xxxvi.; Gen. xxvii. John xxi.; Zech. xii.; Psalm xxxv.; John ii.; Rev. xii.; John xii.; Heb. vii.

-----

*Prayer.*

O LORD God, by whom kings rule, and princes decree justice, help all judges and rulers to do righteously. Help all who may suffer for no fault to forgive those who wrong them, and to put their trust in Thee. Prepare us for that great day when Jesus shall be judge, and all the world shall stand before Him. May he accept and bless us then, for His own name's sake. *Amen.*

-----

## THE EVENING SERVICE

O GOD, who hast prepared the light and the sun, and made him to know his time of going down, now that we are gathered together after the public duties of the day, let thy blessing come down upon us, like soft dews, and fill our hearts with the peace which passeth understanding, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom be glory for evermore  
*Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* cxxi.

BLEST Creator of the light,  
Making day with radiance bright  
Thou didst o'er the forming earth  
Give the golden light its birth.

Shade of eve with morning ray  
Took from Thee the name of day;  
Now again the shades are nigh,  
Listen to our humble cry.

May we ne'er by guilt depressed  
Lose the way to endless rest;  
Nor with idle thoughts and vain  
Bind our souls to earth again.

Rather may we heavenward rise,  
Where eternal treasure lies;  
Purified by grace within,  
Hating every deed of sin.

Holy Father, hear our cry  
Through thy Son, our Lord most High;  
Whom our thankful hearts adore  
With the Spirit evermore.

### JOHN XXI.

**AFTER** these things Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise shewed he himself. 2. There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples. 3. Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing. 4. But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore; but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. 5. Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No. 6. And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore; and now they were not able to draw it for the

multitudes of fishes. 7. Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him (for he was naked), and did not cast himself into the sea. 8. And the other disciples came in a little ship (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits), dragging the net with fishes. 9. As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread. 10. Jesus saith unto them, bring of the fish which ye have now caught. 11. Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to the land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three; and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken. 12. Jesus saith unto them, come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing it was the Lord. 13. Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise. 14. This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples after that he was risen from the dead. 15. So, when they had dined Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. 16. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. 17. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou



me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep. 18. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. 19. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me. 20. Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee? 21. Peter, seeing him, saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? 22. And Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me. 23. Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? 24. This is the disciple which testifieth of these things and wrote these things; and we know that his testimony is true. 25. And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. *Amen.*

-----

*Prayer.*

O HEAVENLY Father, we thy human children, still sojourners on earth, would at the close of another day gather ourselves together around Thy throne of grace, bringing to Thee the offerings of devotion, and making known to Thee our desires and requests. We adore Thee for Thy greatness, O Lord God, and think of Thee with lowliest reverence, as the First and the Last, the Author of all created being, our own Maker, Former of our bodies, and Father of our spirits. We do homage to Thy majesty and glory, King of kings, and Lord of lords. We magnify thy works which men behold in heaven above and earth below, in the circuit of the seasons, in the grateful interchange of day and night. We bless Thy goodness in all these things. We thank Thee for the watchful care which has today kept us in going out and coming in, and for all the gracious help Thou hast given us in warding off temptation, or enabling us to rise and conquer it. Wherein our weak and stumbling steps have this day erred from Thy holy ways, we beseech Thee for Jesus' sake to grant us Thy pardon, renewing Thy forgiving grace to us with assurance of thy peace. Let us rest safely beneath Thy keeping during the night watches; let sleep from Thee soothe and refresh us, and in waking

moments let our souls be fed and strengthened by profitable thoughts. Thou art afresh reminding us by the return of evening shadows how there is here on earth for us no abiding. Our years are gliding away with unpausing flow, and yet a little while, and the place which now knows shall know us no more. Lord, who seest the line of all our future days, and hast fixed their number in Thine own faithfulness and wisdom, lead us securely during what yet remains of our earthly pilgrimage, educating us still by Thy word and the discipline of Thy hand, so as to prepare us for the joys and services of a higher state. May our end be in peaceful hope of seeing Jesus as he is, in the world where Thy presence diffuses everlasting joy. May all our earthly mornings, hailed by us still as they come with gratitude and praise, be earnest of the final morning which shall break on the grave's sleep. For every one in this home, for all in houses of our friends, for all whom it is our duty to remember before Thy mercy-seat, we seek these blessings, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and for His name's sake.

*Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

#### *Morning.*

**God is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.**

Unto thee have I cried, O Lord; and in the morning shall my prayer prevent thee.

Blessed be the Lord, because he hath heard the voice of my supplications.

The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth and with my song will I praise him.

The Lord is their strength, and he is the saving strength of his anointed.

Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed.

Prov. xxx. 5. Ps. lxxxviii. 13. Ps. xxviii. 6, 7, 8. Ps lxxxiv. 9

#### *Evening.*

**Thus saith the Lord, Keep ye judgment, and do justice; for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed.**

Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity;

And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness as the noon day;

And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought.

Isa. lvi. 1. Isa. lviii. 9, 10, 11.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth.**

It is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting; for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart.

Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.

The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning: but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.

A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.

Eccles. vii. 1, 2, 3, 4. Prov. xvii. 17.

*Evening.*

**Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.**

For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

Therefore hearken unto me, ye men of understanding; Far be it from God, that he should do wickedness: and from the Almighty, that he should commit iniquity.

For the work of a man shall he render unto him, and cause every man to find according to his ways.

Yea, surely God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert judgement.

Eccles. xii. 13, 14. Job. xxxiv. 10, 11, 12.

## WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, even the daughters of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering.**

I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord.

Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel: be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem.

The Lord hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more.

In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not;  
and to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack.

Zeph. iii. 10, 12, 14, 15, 16.

*Evening.*

**And Hannah prayed, and said, My heart rejoiceth in the Lord; mine horn is exalted in the Lord; my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; because I rejoice in thy salvation.**

There is none holy as the Lord: for there is none beside thee; neither is there any rock like our God.

Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed,

The bows of the mighty men are broken, and they that stumbled are girded with strength.

He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness.

1 Sam. ii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 9.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord; look unto the rock whence ye are hewn and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.**

Who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass;

And forgettest the Lord thy Maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth; and hast feared continually every day, because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy? and where is the fury of the oppressor?

Isa. li. 1, 12, 13.

*Evening.*

**Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel, and to the house of Judah.**

In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgement and righteousness in the land.

In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord of our Righteousness.

Jer. xxxiii. 14, 15, 16.



## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.**

Wherefore, as by one man sin came into the world, and death by sin, so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.

But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead; much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.

And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift; for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification.

1 Cor. xv. 21. Rom. v. 12, 15, 16.

*Evening.*

**And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John whether he were the Christ, or not:**

John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire;

Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.

Luke iii. 15, 16, 17.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**I will gather them that are sorrowful for the solemn assembly, who are of thee, to whom the reproach of it was a burden.**

Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst no travail with child; for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord.

Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed; neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more.

Zeph. iii. 18. Isa. liv. 1, 4.

*Evening.*

**But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it.**

And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths, for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

Micah iv. 1, 2.

# HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

## FIFTY-FIRST WEEK.

### MORNING WORSHIP.

O LORD our God, we approach Thee in humility and faith, and we implore of Thee to bless us. Bring us and keep us under Thine own tender guidance. O send down Thy holy Spirit into our hearts that He may enlighten, sanctify, and seal us. Keep us, we implore Thee, in a devout frame, and bless to us Thy day, Thy word, and all the means of grace with which in Thine infinite mercy Thou hast so fully supplied us. May we find that it is good for us to draw near to God, and that we seek not his face in vain. Hear us for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

HYMN, or *Psalm xvi.* 7-11.

OUR next of kin, our Brother now,  
Is he to whom the angels bow;  
They join with us to praise his name,  
But we the nearest int'rest claim.

But ah! how faint our praises rise!  
Sure 'tis the wonder of the skies,  
That we, who share his richest love  
So cold and unconcern'd should prove.

O! glorious hour, it comes with speed,  
When we from sin and error freed,  
Shall see his face who died for man,  
And praise him more than angels can.

JONAH I. 15-17, II. 1-10.

SO they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea; and the sea ceased from her raging. 16. Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the Lord, and made vows. 17. Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. 1. Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God out of the fish's belly, 2. And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice. 3. For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all

thy billows and thy waves passed over me. 4. Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple. 5. The waters compassed me about even to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head. 6. I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O Lord my God. 7. When my soul fainted within me I remembered the Lord; and my prayer came in unto thee into thine holy temple. 8. They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy. 9. But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord. 10. And the Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land.

-----

### *Prayer.*

We draw near to Thee, O Lord, and we bow ourselves before Thy throne of grace and majesty. We adore Thee as Creator and Redeemer. Thy power is unbounded, Thy wisdom is infinite, and Thy tender mercies are over all Thy works. We bless Thee for inviting us to come to Thee; for we have often provoked Thee by our disobedience, and we

have brought down upon ourselves the awful penalty of death as the wages of sin. We have sinned and done wickedly in Thy sight. Thy pure and holy law condemns us, our own hearts condemn us, and Thou art “greater than our hearts, and knowest all things.” O forgive us: God be merciful to us sinners. Bestow upon us in Thy great compassion a living faith in Christ Thy Son, who came into the world to save us by His obedience unto death, even the death of the cross. O Let Thy good Spirit come into our souls and work in us profound convictions of sin and guilt and helplessness, so that we may flee at once for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us in the gospel. Keep us, we entreat thee, from indifference and procrastination. May we ever bear in mind that time is rapidly passing away, and may we have grace given us wisely to improve it. May we acquaint ourselves with Thee, and be at peace. Give us, O our Father, a conscious interest in Christ Thy Son. Lord, bring us into a state of pardon and acceptance in Thy sight, and may we not only have the precious peace that passeth all understanding, but may we through thy grace be enabled to preserve it unbroken within us. We confess and lament our numerous imperfections and short-comings, and do Thou of Thy great pity forgive them, and give us grace to obey Thy law more cordially and fully, and to follow more humbly and devotedly the holy and lovely example of Thy Son. May He who took upon Him our nature, and who died

for us on Calvary, be more and more our confidence and joy. O that we had more of His Spirit within us, and that more of His character were manifested by us. May we trust in Him as our Saviour, and also obey Him as our Master; relying upon His atoning sufferings, may we be more and more conformed to His life. Let us enjoy fellowship with Him now, in the hope of nearer and deeper communion with Him for ever. We bless Thee, O our Father-God, for all who have been saved by Him, for all the souls now before Thy throne who have been washed in His blood and perfected by His Spirit. Grant, O God, that we, in Thine own time, be added to the number, and that with them we may praise, and serve, and enjoy Thee, for ever and ever. So long as Thou keepest us in the world, do Thou, Lord, keep us, we pray Thee, from the evil that is in it. Thy servants are ever leaving the world around us, friends and kindred are departing from us, and we would not sorrow as those who have no hope. Thou hast taken them to Thine own bosom, and to unending blessedness before Thee. And though the grave closes over their mortal bodies, we thank Thee for the sure and certain hope of a blessed resurrection, when thy Son the Lord Jesus comes, according to his promise to raise the dead, and take all His people home with Him to glory. We beseech Thee, Lord, that all of us may be found in that happy company over which the second death has no power. O Lord, revive, Thy church everywhere and



convert the world to Christ. Our native land do Thou bless, the Queen and the royal House, all judges and magistrates, with the entire population. O that every soul were in union with Thyself, and were zealous in Thy service, Thou King of kings and Lord of lords. Lord hear us, and accept us, and vouchsafe to us a gracious and speedy answer, for Christ's sake; and to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost be all the glory world without end. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O OUR God, who hast given us Thine own word as the revelation of Thy love, and Thine own day as a period of rest and spiritual refreshment, do Thou now bless us and give us of Thy Spirit, that we may be renewed and strengthened in Christ. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm* xcvi. 10-13.

TO him that loved the souls of men,  
And wash'd us in his blood,  
To royal honours rais'd our head  
And made us priests to God --

To him let ev'ry tongue be praise,  
And e'ry heart be love!  
All grateful honours paid on earth  
And nobler songs above!

Behold on flying clouds he comes!  
His saints shall bless the day;  
While they that pierc'd him sadly mourn  
In anguish and dismay.

Thou art the first, and thou the last;  
Time centres all in thee,  
Th' Almighty God, who was, and is,  
And evermore shall be.

### REVELATION I. 1-8.

THE Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: 2. Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. 3. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand. 4. John to the seven churches which are in Asia: grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; 5. And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful Witness, and the first-begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood. 6. And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for

ever and ever. Amen. 7. Behold, he cometh with clouds;  
and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced  
him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.  
Even so, Amen. 8. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning  
and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was,  
and which is to come, the Almighty.

-----

## SERMON LI.

“BEHOLD, HE COMETH WITH CLOUDS; AND EVERY EYE SHALL SEE HIM, AND THEY ALSO WHICH PIERCED HIM; AND ALL KINDREDS OF THE EARTH SHALL WAIL BECAUSE OF HIM. EVEN SO, AMEN.” -- Rev. I. 7.

I NEED scarcely say that responsibility to God is the law or condition of our creation: for every creature is bound to answer to its Maker for all the gifts which he has conferred upon it. Nor is this connection hard, strange, or unreasonable, for surely it is based on equity. Whatever we have we are bound to lay out for God its giver; and has not He the right to inquire what use we have made of time, talents, and opportunities? And it would be a total misconception of our relation to God to suspect for a moment that he is an austere master, reaping “where he has not sown, and gathering where he has not strawed.” But if there be no divine endowment, there is no human responsibility. Where there is mental imbecility, or imperfect and undeveloped faculties, where no power has been entrusted in God’s mysterious sovereignty, there is nothing to answer for. The gift, moreover, is the gauge of the responsibility. He will not exact from a man what he would expect from an angel. His omniscience and integrity secure an unchallenged result. No one can find fault. He

who made us, and knows us, who sees at once all the intricate machinery of motive and impulse, is our Judge. There are, and must be, therefore, degrees of reward. Some are “scarcely” saved; others have “an entrance ministered unto them abundantly.” They who have done most and suffered most for Christ are likest him, and will be nearest to him. On the other hand, there are, and there must be, degrees of punishment: for although all are alike sinners, all are not sinners alike; some are “beaten with many stripes,” and some with “few.” In a word, the same principle underlies the menace of Jesus -- “But I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you.”

These statements have a solemn and unchanging relation to all of us. No one can evade his responsibility. He is ever in God’s hands, enveloped in God’s presence, and cannot escape. Flight is impossible, resistance is insane. An awakened conscience is but the prescience of a near tribunal; and to fling one’s self out of the world is to thrust himself unbidden into the presence of God. This impossibility of escape is put very graphically by an old Hebrew bard; “Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down: and though they hide themselves on the top of Carmel, I will search and take them out thence; and

though they be hid from sight in the bottom of the sea, thence will I command the serpent, and he shall bite them.”

But while every one who lives must be judged (his term of existence and service on earth being concluded), a public judgment of the whole human race, at one and the same time, is a matter solely of revelation. We could not have anticipated it, and it specially connected with the scheme of redemption. He who loved the world and died for it is to resist it, and the promise of his second personal advent holds a prominent place in the New Testament. As the eleven disciples were gazing up to Him so rapidly disappearing in the clouds, they were thus accosted: “Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” Addressing the Athenian crowd on Mars’ Hill, the apostle told them in precise and lucid terms, “He hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.” Writing to Titus, the same apostle depicts the expectant attitude of the church thus -- “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” And in our text the startling announcement is made, “Behold, he cometh with clouds.”

Now, first it is not one foreign to us, or one who has no near interest in us, who is thus announced, but he “who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,” and raised us to the high dignity of a royal priesthood; our Redeemer who in infinite affection died to save us, who has gone to heaven to reign over us, plead for us, while He is sympathizing with us, and preparing a place for us; our primest benefactor, still clothed in our nature, and ever blessing us out of his inexhaustible fulness. Has not he a special interest in the world, into which he was born an infant of days, and in which he grew up, speaking so many words of wisdom, beauty, and power, doing so many deeds of divine and mighty beneficence; living a life of purity and fascination; maintaining a continuous conflict with evil, and at length triumphing over it in his cross?

“Behold, he cometh” -- as if there had been bustle in heaven and preparations had been completed -- as if the apostle had seen him already on his march, and nigh the confines of earth.

“Behold, he cometh.” The advent is ever imminent, and the certainty of its relative nearness ought to fill us with vigilance and hope, so that we may ever live as under the inspection of an opened heaven and a descending judge. And did this thought dwell in the heart and govern it, what reverence and circumspection would be the result -- what renewed heroism in the daily struggle -- what wrestling



with the Angel of the covenant for revival and growth -- what eagerness to be ever realizing the experience of the apostle, "Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him!"

"Behold, he cometh with clouds," -- in solemn majesty; clouds being often the accompaniment of the divine presence, enshrining and veiling His glory. These clouds may form a magnificent pavilion, or spread themselves in gorgeous array of fire and storm around Him and his throne; for he comes in personal and public glory, arrayed in his royal splendour -- "his own glory and the glory of his Father;" heralded and surrounded by "his mighty angels" -- all in harmony with the work which he comes to perform. For he descends to conclude the annals of a world, to decide the final destiny of all who have lived on it, to show that the purpose of God has underlain all history, and that His great plan has been fully and finally accomplished; to award eternal life "to them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, honour, and immortality: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile."

"Every eye shall see him." The world, with all its myriads of generations, is to be judged. No room for escape, for all must appear; no moment for repentance, for

time has come to its last moment; and no economy in contemplation to reverse the doom of eternal death. To be judged is for every one to stand before “the judgment-seat of Christ,” without veil or disguise, and in the nakedness of his soul’s essence; the light of His countenance so shed in upon it, and so filling it, that in an instant it sees itself in reality, gets a perfect glimpse of its past life, and can anticipate its sentence. But to believers there is a closer interest. The judge is not God in awful majesty -- he whom no man can see and live; but he is Christ, in our human nature, the loving brother, our friend of friends, with a human heart still throbbing in his bosom. “The Father hath given him to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of Man.” “He hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained.” “The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power.” Thus the uniform teaching of the New Testament is that the Redeemer is to be the judge. He has the qualification to be judge, because he is God; and he has the right to be judge, because he is man and mediator. In the case of all to whom the gospel has been preached, his one inquiry from them is whether they have believed in his

love and relied on his atonement? and “he that believeth is saved.” The prospect is a cheering one to all who are Christ’s, for it is his tribunal before which they are to stand. It is the very same throne to which they have often come by invitation as a throne of grace, “to obtain mercy and find grace to help them.” They have obtained that mercy and found that grace; and when that throne has become one of judgment, and they are brought before it by summons, they are not alarmed. He who occupies it has pardoned, purified, and saved them -- given them his own image, and lifted them to fellowship with himself, so that the smile that lights up his face will be only a prelude to the welcome which is bursting from his lips: “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from before the foundation of the world.” Yet as the pillar that guided Israel of old kept its bright face toward them, but turned a side of “cloud and darkness” to the Egyptians; so this aspect of the judgment, while it cheers and comforts the disciples, casts unbelievers into consternation and panic, because Jesus the judge they have not accepted as Saviour. His love and his blood have made no impression on them. They have not been brought into living union with him, nor has his Spirit dwelt within them to regenerate and perfect them. They lived for themselves and never enjoyed renewing power; him as master they did not obey; him as example they did not follow; and therefore, destitute of faith in him,

they are “condemned already.” Their want of confidence in him unfits them for all service and renders them unsusceptible of all enjoyment, so that they sink inevitably into agony and despair. The Lord, of his infinite mercy grant that all of us “may find mercy of the Lord in that day,” and may it be our privilege so to “abide in him, that when he shall appear we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.”

“Every eye shall see him; they, too, that pierced him.” His very enemies shall hide their heads in confusion and despair before him. The court that conspired to murder him, and cast aside all the forms and fences of law for the purpose; the priests who desecrated the office which they filled; the scribes who violated the statutes which they professed to interpret; the rabble who yelled, “Crucify him, crucify him;” all who took part in the terrible tragedy -- shall see him: him whom they branded as a blasphemer, the Son of the Most High; him whom they killed as an imposter, the one Redeemer of men; and him whom they hanged as a felon, the appointed judge of the living and the dead. No wonder that his coming shall produce consternation. Such dismay, however, is not confined to the men of Christ’s own time and country; “all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.” There are those still who are guilty of the crime of piercing him, “who crucify the Lord of glory afresh, and put him to an open shame;” and others who,

eating and drinking at the sacramental table “unworthily,” are guilty “guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.” For such there is mercy yet, if they will only accept it; there being no sin beyond the reach of his atoning merit, and no sinner beyond his power to save. There is room in that bosom for them that pierced him, and if they take refuge in it they shall be rescued, saved, and blessed for ever with ineffable fellowship: --

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in thee;  
Let the water and the blood,  
From thy riven side which flowed,  
Be of sin the double cure --  
Save me from its guilt and power.

According to the teaching of scripture the last coming of Christ shall be sudden, and as it happens so unexpectedly, it shall take the world by surprise. “The day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night.” As it was in the days of Noah when the flood was poured out, as it was in the days of Lot when fire and brimstone were showered upon Sodom so shall it be at the coming of the Son of Man. The world apparently is to be slumbering in security; it population eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage; men engaging in enterprizes requiring years and years for their completion; the great day never engaging

human hearts less than on the eve of its arrival, when, in a moment, a trumpet is heard, and the earth is stirring, and the dead are raised, and the great white throne is set, and each conscience cries to itself, "Prepare to meet thy God."

Behold, he has come! They who are alive at the second Advent, even those of them who are believers, reap no immediate benefit from their survival. At his descent "with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God," "the dead in Christ shall rise first" -- first, not before the wicked, but first, or before the living are changed. It is a strange thought that many men shall not die -- shall outlive all history, and witness the throes of expiring nature. But the dead are forestalled in nothing by them. The living are changed, and duly fitted in spiritual and physical constitution for passing into glory. But this refining influence does not seize and mould them till the blessed dead are roused from their graves. If there be a reaction after the so-called Millenium is passed, and if the conspiracy of Gog and Magog symbolize it, then through their last unbelief and hostility "all nations shall wail because of him" who has come to judge them, and against whose righteous sentence there can be no appeal. O the sad results of sin as thus portrayed. Were the revelation made to a sinless world that its Creator and Benefactor was about to pay it a promised visit, would it not prepare itself, and bestir its mightiest energies? would not the "floods clap their hands,

and the hills be joyful together, before the Lord; for he cometh to judge the earth?" But Christ's coming, so fraught with blessing, creates a general consternation, an ominous consciousness of coming doom in all the faithless. They "shall wail because of him" -- the pure, loving, and gentle One -- him in whom all glorified spirits rejoice, and whom they are praising for his incarnation and death. No wailing can be connected with him who gives life and gladness, save from the rejection of him who gives life and gladness, save from the rejection of him by the unbelieving, the indifferent, the impenitent; and when the knowledge of his character comes to them too late to awaken faith, it must fill them with unspeakable anguish.

But why should believers be disturbed and alarmed when they speak or think of the last day? Why should it be a source of trembling and foreboding, and not rather of hopeful and joyous anticipation? Why dwell on what may be called the darker aspect of it -- the dissolution of nature, the wreck of the elements, the passing away of the heavens, the conflagration of the earth, and all the other terrific phenomena? Why not bear in mind that there is a higher and glorious phase in which you are specially interested with "all them also that love his appearing." Nay, till that period you are not fully redeemed. Only on one portion of your nature has the grace of Christ taken hold; your soul is saved. But you are something more than soul; your soul

dwells in a body organized for it. That body shares in the blessing of Christ's redeeming work, but does not enjoy full participation until he comes again. It goes down to the tomb, and lies there in the hope of a glorious resurrection; but that resurrection does not take place till the second Advent. The soul passes into happiness far from complete, for it is a fragmentary and imperfect thing without its physical frame, and thus, and thus it is "waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body." So that salvation in its fullness is conferred only at the last day. O let it ever impress you, and be a living belief and hope within you, that then, and not till then, you are completely blessed; that then, and not till then, is the crown and totality of divine grace and power conferred upon you; that then, and not till then, you realize the Saviour's work in its final completeness: for he died not to save souls, but to save men and women in their whole nature -- body, soul, and spirit. The New Testament lays a continuous stress on the resurrection of the body, dwelling oftener upon it than upon the mere salvation of the soul, though indeed the one most certainly implies the other. Salvation in its final entirety is kept in reserve for us till He comes, and should not that event, bringing with it this richest blessing, and taking our whole nature to highest glory, be fondly welcomed by you? "Amen. Even so, come Lord Jesus."



In a word, looking at the subject in this broader light, there are momentous reasons why we should rejoice in the fulfilment of the promise, “Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me.” The church will then be complete in numbers and in happiness. Many generations have passed since Abel warbled his solitary song before the throne, and he has been joined by many in every century; spirits are ever passing away to glory, and the number of the blessed is ever augmenting, till it become “a great multitude which no man can number.” But still the glorified church is not completed, and therefore the prayer is ever rising before the throne, “Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory;” and in answer to this prayer of the great High Priest, good men die and go to satisfy their Saviour by their nearness to him, and by their possession of His image. But when he comes again the number of the redeemed shall be completed, for humanity as a species shall cease to exist on earth, and the whole church shall be for the first time a band of living contemporaries around him. And then, too, their bodies being raised and spiritualized, and their entire nature fitted to dwell in glory, they enter upon full fruition in the heaven of heavens, where they shall for ever rejoice in perfection, and pour out their hearts surcharged with grateful emotion, in eternal and rapturous halleluiahs.

Such, then, being the indescribable blessings lying over for us, should not we with rapture hail the day of days -- the second coming, ever living for it and looking forward to it? Amidst all trials, struggles, and difficulties, amidst all afflictions, bereavements, and deaths, let us be ever saying -- ‘Our Lord cometh,’ to crown his own, and take them home with himself to unclouded fellowship with him, and to unending blessedness in his gracious presence.

“Ever upward may we soar,  
Rising on the wings of love;  
Looking when our Lord shall come,  
Waiting, longing after home.  
There may we with thee remain,  
Partners of thine endless reign;  
There thy face unclouded see,  
Find our heaven of heavens in Thee.”

-- JOHN EADIE, LL. D.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

### THE CROSS.

THE Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, was convinced that Jesus had done no crime for which he ought to die, and he tried, several times over, to get the Jews to allow him to be set free. He said to them that he had examined him, and had found no fault in him; nor yet had Herod when he sent him to that prince. He asked them, therefore, if he would let him go. There was a custom of releasing a prisoner at the time of the passover, and he said to them, Shall it be the King of the Jews that I shall set free this year? But the Jews would not hear of that. There was a notable prisoner lying in jail at the time -- a robber and a murderer -- and they cried out in answer to Pilate's proposal to release Jesus, No, no; not this man, but Barabbas. What then, said Pilate, shall I do to him whom ye call the King of the Jews? And they said, crucify him, crucify him. Pilate weakly and wrongly yielded to their clamour, and set the bad Barabbas free, and agreed to yield Jesus up to the will of his enemies, by commanding him to be scourged, as was the custom when a criminal was condemned to the cross. Before he did this, however, he showed that he still believed Jesus to be

innocent, and tried to throw all the blame of his death upon the Jews, by having water brought out, and washing his hands in their presence, while he said aloud, See ye to the blood of this just man: I am free from it. But he was not free from it: this washing of his hands condemned himself; for it said that he believed Jesus to be quite innocent, and yet he was going to send him to the death of the cross, just to please and content men that hated him.

After Jesus had been scourged, Pilate, however, tried once more to move the Jews to let him go without further punishment. The soldiers had taken him, all covered with the weals and wounds the rods had made on his sacred flesh, and had clothed him with a scarlet robe, and set a crown of thorns that they platted on his head, and put a reed in his right hand. They did this as if to say, This man is going to be killed for making himself a king. They then mocked him, bowing their knees before him, and saying, Hail, thou King of the Jews! They then went from mockery to cruel insult, spitting in his face and striking him with their hands, and even with the reed, which they took him for the purpose. It was after this had been done that Pilate tried once again to have him set free. He brought him out from the house, with the thorn crown on his head, and wearing the scarlet robe, he said to them, I bring him out to you that you may know that I find no fault in him. Behold the man! And surely they might have looked on that meek

and holy sufferer, and changed their minds. But they did not. They said, Away with him to the cross. He deserves to die by our law; for he made himself the Son of God. That word frightened Pilate more and more; and after he had spoken with Jesus in the house, he tried again to persuade the Jews to let him be released. On that they grew bold and desperate, and scared the governor with a threat. They said, If you let this man go, you are not the friend of the emperor. He has made himself a king, and any one that does that must be a rebel against Caesar. So at last Pilate went and sat down in the judgment-seat, and gave formal and final sentence that Jesus should die; and he was led away to be crucified.

When Judas that betrayed him found out that he was really condemned to death, a great horror of soul came upon him. He was filled with remorse and could not bear to look on the money he had got to give Christ up. So he hasted to where the chief priests who had bribed him were standing in the temple, and showed them the thirty pieces of silver, and cried, Take them back: I have sinned; I have betrayed innocent blood. But these proud bad men only said, what is that to us? It is your own affair: see to it. Thereupon Judas flung the silver down in the temple and went and hanged himself. To such a miserable end the traitor came!

When the guard of soldiers took Jesus from the judgment-seat to lead him away to die, they put the wood of

his cross upon him that he might carry it to where he was to be nailed to its beams. But after a little he was like to faint under its weight; and laying hold of a man they met coming out of the country into the town they made him bear it on his shoulders, walking behind Jesus. This man's name was Simon. He belonged to Cyrene in Africa, and was, perhaps a black man. What an honour he would think it, in after days, to have carried the Saviour's cross. There was a great crowd gathered by this time following the procession. There were many women among them, and they wept for pity, and wailed and lamented about Jesus. But he said to them, Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep for yourselves. Dreadful days for you are at hand. If they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry? And thus the sad procession went on.

At length, outside the walls of the city, the people that were taking Jesus to death came to a place called Golgotha, or Calvary (which means Place of a skull; as we might say, Skull-place, from its shape or because it was a place of death), and there they laid the cross on the ground and nailed Jesus, stripped of his clothes, to the beams. As they were driving the nails through his feet and hands Jesus said, Father, forgive them; they know not what they do. There were two others (thieves they were) nailed to the cross at the same time; and when the three crosses were set upright in their places, Christ's was in the middle. The

soldiers that had stripped and nailed him began to share his clothes, dividing them into four parts among them. When they came to his upper coat, they found it had no seam, but was close woven in one piece. So they thought it a pity to tear it and cast lots to see who would get it; they were doing what the Scriptures had long before said should be done, without being aware of it. Then they sat down and watched beside the crosses, as they had been bid to do.

When persons were crucified in those times, it was usual to put an inscription over their heads, saying what they were, and why they were put to death. Now Pilate had directed what was to be written on Christ's cross, and it was to be in three languages -- Hebrew and Greek and Latin. The words were, This is Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews. The chief priests did not like the title in that form, and they asked Pilate to change it, and make it read that he said he was King of the Jews. But the Roman governor was in no mood to mind them, and answered shortly, What I have written I have written.

Crowds of people read this title, as they went by the place. Numbers also mocked and taunted him as they came near, wagging their heads, and saying, Save yourself, you that could build the temple in three days; come down from the cross if you are the Son of God. The chief priests and scribes too, who were looking on, said among themselves, Now is his time; let him come down from the cross, and we

will believe him. He said, he trusted in God that he would deliver him; let God save him now, if he cares to have him. The soldiers also joined in the mockery. Even the thieves, right and left, taunted him, and cast in his teeth his helplessness, as they thought it. They said, If you are God's Son, save yourself and us. After a while, however, one of the thieves changed his mind. He saw how Jesus bore all his sufferings, and heard things he said, and the Spirit of God touching his heart, he reproved his comrade, and began to pray, Lord, when thou comest into thy kingdom, remember me; and Jesus said, You shall be in paradise with me this very day.

Before this Jesus had seen his mother with other women, and John the beloved disciple, standing by his cross. And he looked to them, and said to Mary, See thy son; and to John, See thy mother. And John from that hour took Mary to his own home.

To make all this harder to bear, and to be a token of what Jesus was suffering for us, a great darkness came on about noon, and continued for three hours over the whole land. And there was a deeper darkness in Jesus' soul. His Father's face was hidden from him. It was then that he sent up a loud cry, saying, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? After that, some of those who were near heard him say, I thirst; and one of them ran, and dipping a sponge in vinegar, put it on a reed, and held it to his lips.



When he had tasted it he said, It is finished; and with a loud cry, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit! Then he bowed his head, and breathed his soul away.

-----

### QUESTIONS FROM THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Where is it said that some persons came to Christ to tell him that Herod wanted to kill him?
2. Do you know of a robe that was torn and made red with blood, to suggest that the person who wore it had been murdered?
3. Can you find a prophecy which in one verse foretells that Jesus would be scourged, mocked, and spit upon?
4. Is there a prophecy that says Jesus would not have a fair and just trial?
5. Where do we find a horrible circumstance about the death of Judas related?
6. What psalm, as quoted by an apostle, refers to the treachery and doom of Judas?
7. Where do we read of a disciple of the name of Simeon, or Simon, whose surname was Black?
8. What green tree was seen to be on fire, without being burned to ashes?

9. In what chapters of the Gospels is the destruction of Jerusalem foretold?

10. Where is the prophecy to be found about the division of Christ's garments?

11. Can you find a prophecy about people taunting Christ when he hung on the cross?

12. Where do we learn that one of the thieves who at first mocked Christ, afterwards was sorry and prayed?

13. In which of the Gospels do we read of what Jesus, on the cross, said to his mother and to John?

14. How many voices of Jesus were uttered from the cross?

ANSWERS to the previous questions may be found on turning to the following chapters. -- Luke xiii.; Gen. xxxvii.; Isa. l.; Isa. liii, compared with Acts viii.; Acts i.; Ps. cix.; Acts xiii.; Ex. iii.; Matt. xxiv.; Mark xiii., Luke xix. and xxi; Ps. xxii; Luke xxiii.; John xix. For the last, see all the Gospels, and the Story foregoing.

-----

*Prayer.*

O LORD God, who didst not spare thine own Son, but give Him up to the death for our sakes, grant that we may ever keep our eye on the cross of Jesus. May we see it to give us peace; to rouse us to right actions in life; to cheer us when we come to die. May we glory in it. May we be thereby crucified to the world. And may we, following Jesus, bear our own crosses, not complaining, but thankful when we remember what He bore for us. Let us not, by our continuing in sin, show that in spirit we consent to the deed of those who crucified him, nor let us in any case make common cause with those who condemn the guiltless. Like the gentle and loving Saviour, enable us to forgive those who do us hurt, and to pray for them, and requite their evil with good. Hear us, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake.  
*Amen.*

---

## THE EVENING SERVICE

O LORD, our Father, Thou hast given us Thy holy and blessed word, and we pray Thee to give us the right understanding of it, more earnest faith in it, and a more fervent desire to walk in its light. May we feel more of its saving power on our hearts, so that our lives may be brought into fuller harmony with it. May it be as the hidden manna, nourishing and sustaining our souls unto eternal life. O Lord, hear us; O Lord, forgive and answer, for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

### HYMN, *or Psalm* l. 3-6.

THE dead in Christ shall first arise,  
At the last trumpet sounding;  
Caught up to meet him in the skies,  
With joy their Lord surrounding:  
No gloomy fears their souls dismay;  
His presence sheds eternal day  
On those prepared to meet him.

Great God! what do I see and hear?  
The end of things created!  
Behold the Judge of man appear,  
On clouds of glory seated!  
Low at his cross, I view the day  
When heav'n and earth shall pass away,  
And thus prepare to meet him.

## ACTS I. 1-12.

The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, 2. Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen: 3. To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: 4. And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. 5. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. 6. When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? 7. And he said unto them, it is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. 8. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. 9. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. 10. And while they

looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; 11. Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. 12. Then returned they unto Jerusalem a sabbath-day's journey.

### Acts II. 1-8 and 31-39.

AND when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. 3. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. 4. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. 5. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. 6. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded because that every man heard them speak in his own language. 7. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? 8. And

how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? 31. He, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. 32. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all our witnesses. 33. Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. 34. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, 35. Until I make thy foes thy footstool. 36. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. 37. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter, and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? 38. Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. 39. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

-----

## *Prayer.*

O LORD, Thou art the first and the last. Thine are all things, for Thou hast made them, and they are upheld in being by the word of Thy power. All Thy works praise Thee, and Thy saints bless Thee. We humbly and heartily thank Thee for all Thy goodness. We live by Thy bounty. Life and all that makes life enjoyable is Thy sovereign gift. Of Thee, to Thee, and through Thee are all things. We bless Thee especially for Thine unspeakable gift, the Lord Jesus, who came and suffered and died to win us back to Thyself. Lord, we pray Thee to lead us to the cross, that we may find refuge there from guilt, and sorrow, and the fear of death. We would not trust in our own righteousness, but solely in the righteousness of Christ, our blessed Redeemer, and in his merit and mediation. We would count all but loss to be found in Him, our Light and Life. Thou, Lord, who didst send Thy Son, have mercy upon us. Thou, Jesus, who didst come to die, have pity upon us, and give us union with Thyself, and take entire possession of us. And Thou Divine Spirit, descend and dwell within us, and be to our souls the earnest of the future inheritance, and our preparation for it, making our very bodies temples for Thyself. Lord, we have no life but from Thee, and no help but in Thee. Be ever near us, to guide



and bless us. O leave us not to ourselves, but be the strength of our hearts and our portion for ever. O that our hearts were pure, and lowly, and upright -- possessing more and more of that spiritual-mindedness which is life and peace. We would feel it to be our safety to be in Christ; may it be our eager desire to be like Him, in the hope of being with Him for ever and ever. Enable us, Lord, to deny ourselves, and to take up our cross and follow Him, who pleased not Himself, who came not to be ministered to, but to minister. May each of us be enabled ever to believe on Him, and loving Him, to do His will, so that on each of us may be pronounced the blessing, Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. Lord save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance; feed them also and lift them up for ever. O let Thy church soon possess the world; give Thy Son speedily the heathen for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession. And all we ask is in Christ's name, and for His sake. *Amen.*

---

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

#### *Morning.*

**In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel.**

And a man shall be as an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place; as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim: and the ears of them that hear shall hearken.

The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly.

Isa. iv. 2. Isa. xxxii. 2, 3, 4.

#### *Evening.*

**Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.**

And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us.

Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

But we believe that, through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved, even as they.

Acts xv. 7, 8, 10, 11.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off.**

Though I walk in the midst of trouble thou wilt revive me; thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me.

The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me; thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands.

Light is sown for the righteous and gladness for the upright in heart.

Ps. cxxxviii. 6, 7, 8.      Ps. xcvii. 11.

*Evening.*

**O sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory.**

The Lord hath made known his salvation; his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen.

He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel; all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth; make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise.

Ps. xcvi. 1, 2, 3, 4.

## WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers,**

God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David.

Wherefore he saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption.

Acts xiii. 32, 33, 34, 35.

*Evening.*

**These six things doth the Lord hate; yea, seven are an abomination unto:**

A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,

An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief,

A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.

If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

Prov. vi. 16, 17, 18, 19.      1 John i. 7.

## THURSDAY.

*Morning.*

**This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.**

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

Let that therefore abide in you which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son and in the Father.

And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal.

John xv. 12 13, 14. 1 John ii. 24, 25.

*Evening.*

**The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens.**

By his knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew.

My son, let not them depart from thine eyes: keep sound wisdom and discretion;

So shall they be life unto thy soul, and grace to thy neck.

Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble.

When thou liest down thou shalt not be afraid; yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet.

Prov. iii. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24.

**FRIDAY.**

*Morning.*

**Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; and let men say among the nations, The Lord reigneth.**

And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation

shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

But they shall sit every man under his vine, and under his fig-tree; and none shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it.

For all people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever.

1 Chron. xvi. 31. Micah iv. 3, 4, 5.

*Evening.*

**The Lord will bless his people with peace.**

The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.

And the cow and the ear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den.

They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

Ps. xxix. 11. Isa. xi. 6, 7 8, 9.

## SATURDAY.

*Morning.*

**Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.**

For I rejoiced greatly when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth.

I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.

Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers;

Which have borne witness of thy charity before the church: whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well.

3 John 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

*Evening.*

**But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,**

Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

And of some have compassion, making a difference:

And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.



Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,

To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

Jude 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25.

# HOME PREACHER OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

## FIFTY-SECOND WEEK.

### MORNING WORSHIP.

O THOU who art the only living and true God, who showest to them that be in error the light of Thy truth, to the intent that they may return into the way of righteousness, grant unto us who have been admitted into the fellowship of Christ's religion, that as strangers and pilgrims we may abstain from fleshly lust, and may follow all such things as are agreeable to holy profession, through our Lord Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

### HYMN, or *Psalm xc.* 13-17.

FOR thy mercy and thy grace  
Constant though another year,  
Hear our song of thankfulness;  
Jesus our Redeemer, hear.

In our weakness and distress,  
Rock of Strength, be Thou our stay;  
In the pathless wilderness  
Be our true and living way.

So within thy palace gate  
We shall praise on golden strings,  
Thee the only Potentate,  
Lord of lord, and King of kings.

#### MALACHI IV.

FOR, behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. 2. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. 3. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet, in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts. 4. Remember ye the law of Moses my servants, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgements. 5. Behold, I will

send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: 6. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

-----

*Prayer.*

O LORD, we would come unto Thy presence, at this time, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, our alone advocate and intercessor with the Father, to offer Thee our worship and present to Thee our prayer. Graciously vouchsafe to us the aid of Thy Holy Spirit, that so we may worship Thee, who art a Spirit, in spirit and in truth, and may present to Thee, not the mere utterance of the lips, but the sincere and earnest desire of our hearts.

O God, who art the source of our life and the length of our days, we gratefully acknowledge Thy great goodness to us, in that Thou hast brought us in safety to the last sabbath of another year. Through dangers, seen and unseen, Thou hast brought us; Thy bounteous hand hath supplied our daily wants; Thou has kept us in the house and by the way; and amid the varying experiences of our journey, Thou hast never forsaken us or ceased to do us

good. What shall we render unto the Lord for all his benefits unto us? We will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord. Bless the Lord, O our souls, and forget not all His benefits: who forgiveth all our iniquities; who healeth all our diseases; who redeemeth our life from destruction; who crowneth us with loving-kindness and tender mercies. Here would we anew this day set up our Ebenezer and say, Hitherto the Lord hath helped us.

We would also, O Lord, remember our faults this day. We would humble ourselves before Thee, at the remembrance of the little improvement we have made of the many privileges we have enjoyed. We have not profited by Thy bounty as we ought; we have not used, as we might, the opportunities of serving Thee which Thou hast given us; we have often forgotten Thee, and sadly gone astray from Thee; we have been selfish, and carnal, and worldly; many things which we ought to have done we have left undone; and alas! we have done many things which we ought not to have done. Our own hearts condemn us, and Thou art greater than our hearts, and knowest all things. O how unworthy and evil must we appear in Thy holy sight! Have mercy on us, O God; have mercy on us, and, for the sake of Him who died for us, do Thou forgive all our iniquity, and thoroughly cleanse us from all our sin. Restore to us the joy of Thy salvation; fill us with a sense of Thy redeeming grace; and give us to experience the blessedness of the man

whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Let Thy mercy, O God, be upon us as we hope in Thee.

We rejoice that, amid a conscious unworthiness, and under a humbling sense of our sinfulness, we can look up with confidence unto Thee, as our Almighty and All-gracious Father. With us all is changing and uncertain, but Thou changest not; from eternity to eternity Thou, O God, art. Thy grace never faileth; Thy promises are ever sure; Thy mercy endureth for ever. And we rejoice in the unfailing efficacy of our Saviour's work on our behalf -- in the abiding sufficiency of that sacrifice which, once for all, He offered for sin, and in His ability to save to the uttermost, all that come unto Thee through Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for us. In Him, who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, we would continually abide; drawing from His exhaustless fulness all that we need; feeling the constraining power of His love; consecrating to Him all that we are and have; walking in His ways and doing all His holy will.

Most merciful God, who hast the hearts of all men in Thy hands, may it please Thee at this time to incline our hearts to Thy service, that so, by reading of Thy word and meditation thereon, our souls may be quickened, refreshed, and strengthened. May we be as those whom the Lord visiteth and satisfieth with His goodness. Waiting upon Thee may we renew our strength, mount up as on the wings

of eagles, run and not be weary, walk and not faint. So endow us with Thy Holy Spirit, that we shall be raised above that which is transient and unsatisfying, and be made to find all our well-springs in Thee. O satiate our weary souls, and replenish us with Thy favour, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

-----

## THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

O LORD, Thou hast made our days on earth as an hand-breadth, and in Thy infinite mercy hast taught us to look for a better and an enduring life beyond the grave. May Christ now be formed in all of us the hope of glory, that when we are called away from this fleeting state, an entrance may be ministered unto us abundantly into Thine everlasting kingdom, for our Redeemer's sake. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm xxxix.* 4-8.

LIFE is a span, a fleeting hour;  
How soon the vapour flies!  
Man is a tender, transient flower,  
That even in blooming dies.

Death spreads like winter's frozen arms,  
And beauty smiles no more;  
Ah! where are now those rising charms  
Which pleased our eyes before?

The once-lov'd form, now cold and dead,  
Each mournful thought employs;  
And nature weeps, her comforts fled,  
And wither'd all her joys!

Hope looks beyond the bounds of time,  
When what we now deplore  
Shall rise to full immortal prime,  
And bloom, to fade no more!



## JOB XIV.

MAN that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. 2. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not. 3. And dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one, and bringest me into judgment with thee? 4. Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one. 5. Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee; thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass. 6. Turn from him, that he may rest, till he shall accomplish, as an hireling, his day. 7. For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. 8. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground; 9. Yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant. 10. But man dieth, and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? 11. As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up; 12. So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep. 13. Oh that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me! 14. If a man die, shall he live again? All the days of my appointed time will I wait,

till my change come. 15. Thou shalt call and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands. 16. For now thou numberest my steps: dost thou not watch over my sin? 17. My transgression is sealed up in a bag, and thou sewest up mine iniquity. 18. And surely the mountain falling cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of his place. 19. The waters wear the stones: thou wastest away the things which grow out of the dust of the earth; and thou destroyest the hope of man. 20. Thou prevailest for ever against him, and he passeth: thou changest his countenance, and send him away. 21. His sons come to honour, and he knoweth it not; and they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them. 22. But his flesh upon him shall have pain, and his soul within him shall mourn.

#### JOHN V. 19-29.

THEN answered Jesus, and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. 20. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. 21. For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and

quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. 22. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: 23. That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him. 24. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life. 25. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live. 26. For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself: 27. And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. 28. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, 29. And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, &c.

-----

## SERMON LII.

“FOR WHAT IS YOUR LIFE? IT IS EVEN A VAPOUR, THAT APPEARETH FOR A LITTLE TIME, AND THEN VANISHETH AWAY.” -- James iv. 14.

THE sacred writer is in this contest arguing against an over-confident reckoning upon the future. To this we are all prone. Man has the power of anticipating the future, as well as of recollecting the past. He can look forward as well as around him and behind him. He can borrow, from experience accumulated in the past, guidance for the time to come. He can form plans for the regulation of his conduct and the management of his affairs in the future. And having confidence in the uniformity of nature, he is apt to overlook his own transitoriness, and the uncertainty of his own life, health, and ability, and in the confidence of his heart to say, “Tomorrow will be as this day, and much more abundant. To-day or to-morrow I will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell and get gain.” Yes, to-morrow will come, and it will be in itself as this day; but will it be so to *you*? Shall you be here to enjoy it or use it as you purpose? Or, if here, will your condition be such as to enable you to carry on, and carry out, the designs you have formed? “Go to,” says the sacred writer; “ye know not what shall be on the morrow: for what is your life? It is

even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away.” In this fleeting transient life, twenty-four hours are more than you can safely count on. You know not what a day or an hour may bring forth. There is but One to whom the future is certainly known. Be wise, then, and look above ourselves to that Infinite Being in whose hand your breath is, and whose are all your ways, and learn to say, “If the Lord will we shall live and do this or that.”

This lesson of the sacred writer, at all times needful and impressive, acquires a peculiar force and solemnity when uttered amid the departing shadows of an expiring year. The rapid lapse of time is one of those commonplaces to which all assent, but which very few realize and ponder as they ought. The truth is so familiar and trite, that the utterance of it awakens no emotion. It is like an old acquaintance, whom we see every day, and whose visit causes no surprise and excites but little interest. The only thing that has the effect of rousing us to ponder the transitoriness of life is the occurrence of some event which tells that *time is past*. “We take no note of time but from its loss.” Well is it when we note it even from that; well is it when the termination of any measured period of time surprises us into reflection on the rapidity with which time is passing away from us, and we are lapsing into eternity. For men are prone to turn away from them even such admonitions, and to silence amid noise and merriment the

voice that would summon them to “number their days so as to apply their hearts to wisdom.” Who shall say that this is wise? Who shall adjudge this to be worthy a being endowed with intelligence, capable of moral impressions, and born for immortality? Be it ours to avail ourselves of the opportunity which this the last sabbath of another year presses upon us to pursue those meditations which the truth stated in the text naturally suggests. I remark --

I. *We are here reminded of the transitoriness and brevity of human life.* “What is your life?” asks the sacred writer; and he replies to the question by selecting one of the most unstable and fleeting objects that present themselves to our observation as a fitting image of life. It is not the ever-enduring rock; it is not the ever-flowing stream; it is not the tree that fades and revives year by year, to which he compares it, but to a vapour, a shadowy unsubstantial thing, a thing no sooner seen than it vanishes for ever. And in keeping with this are all the similitudes which the Scriptures employ to set forth a just representation of man’s life. They speak of it passing as a tale that is told, pleasant or painful while it lasts, but soon ending, and leaving no abiding impression behind. They describe time as flying through the web of life swifter than a weaver’s shuttle. They compare life to a shadow, that flies before the sun and vanishes away. It is like grass that flourishes in the morning, and in the evening is cut down, and withereth

away. By such similitudes, borrowed from the common experiences of every-day life, God would in his word remind us of the transitoriness of our existence here; and would thereby impress upon us the conviction that this is not our continuing place of abode; that here we are but pilgrims and strangers; and that we are fast passing on to the grand crisis of our being, when our condition for eternity will be fixed for weal or for woe.

How true does the statement of the inspired writer appear when we look back on the year which is soon to close! What a transient vapour presents itself to our view! How rapidly it has passed! It seems but as yesterday since this year began. Many events, no doubt, have transpired as it rolled along; many experiences have been passed through, some painful, some pleasant, by every individual during its lapse; momentous histories, having their issues in eternity, have been recorded of it in the remembrance-book of God: but to us these manifold events, projected on the plane of the past, and seen in perspective there, seem little and crowded into a very narrow compass. And how noiselessly, how stealthily, its hours and days and weeks have slid on one after the other, till now they are nearly all gone! How many projects and plans, which floated before our minds at the commencement of it, have gone up as dust! How we counted upon it, and on what we should do as it passed on! And now that it is about to close, what remains to us of all

we purposed and planned? Alas! in the majority of instances, only the shadowy remembrance of what might have been, but never has been!

And what is this but a specimen of what happens every year of our lives? Truly our life is but a vapour. Whether we think of it or not, our years pass on with ever-lengthening stride, bearing us to that “bourne from which no traveller returns.” And ere long, for each of us the *last* year shall come. Take any congregation this day assembled, numbering, say one thousand persons. They are there in health and vigour, and it may be some of them counting on many days. But estimating their prospects by the general average, what is the certainty that lies before them? In the course of one year thirty-three will have died; in the course of ten years two hundred and ninety-four will have died; in the course of twenty years five hundred and thirty-nine will have died; in thirty years, seven-hundred and thirty-eight; in forty years, eight hundred and seventy-two; in fifty years nine hundred and sixty-one will be no more; and of the remainder a few years more at the longest will see the end. What a view this gives us of the mortality of man and the vanity of life? It takes but half a century to sweep a whole congregation, such as I have supposed, into the grave! And then, as they are there of all ages, and as death takes not the aged alone, but the young and middle-aged as well, we know not when any one’s turn



may come, or in which year's draft we ourselves may be called away. We start together on our journey on these few years, and every year our ranks diminish; ere twenty years are past half of our number probably are gone; and ere another thirty have lapsed, only a few survivors remain waiting to be called away. This is no fancy picture; it is the verdict of an appeal to facts and figures which cannot be set aside. Let us lay it to heart. Let us realize the fragility and transitoriness of these lives of ours. Let us not live as if we were to live alway; but as beings who are certain to die, and may die at any moment, let us live in constant preparation for our great change, that when the Master calls us we may be found with our work done, our warfare accomplished, and ready for our rest.

II. I remark secondly, that *though our years pass away rapidly and our life is but a vapour, yet time ever bears with it into eternity innumerable momentous issues.* -- Our life is but a vapour; but it is like those vapours that float in the atmosphere loaded with influences and pregnant with results. Time glides rapidly away from us, but "the ministries of time" are mighty, and its deeds momentous. The agent passes; the act and its consequences abide. Time is mighty to test character, to reveal the true inner nature of the individual, and to manifest the proper and necessary results of conduct. Along its shores are the wrecks of many a fair promise, many a vaunted scheme, many a proud and

tempting enterprise; whilst, on the other hand, many a scheme and plan of conduct and method of action on which the gay and thoughtless and pleasure-seeking poured scorn, as did the antediluvians on Noah when he was building the ark, has been proved by the test of time to be wise and good-- sufficient to ride out the gale, to abide the buffeting of the waves, and to carry that which was entrusted to it to a quiet and safe haven. Time is, in a sense, the measure of all things. It is the great revealer, the mighty worker. God himself commits the vindication of his ways to the action of time. We cannot comprehend his working, we cannot measure his plans. Much that He does appears to us dark and mysterious. His footsteps are in the great deep; clouds and darkness are around his throne. What He doth we know not now; but the time will show. The faithful and trusting spirit shall know it hereafter. In due time we shall understand the matter, and the mystery shall be made plain, and the ways of God shall be vindicated. "The vision is for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and shall not lie; though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry."

In the discipline of the individual life time plays a most important part. The fruits of life's experiences, its joys and its sorrows, its trials and its triumphs, do not ripen all at once. The goal at which we have to aim is reached only by slow degrees, and through many trying and depressing

adventures. The sunny peaks that stand up serene and calm above the clouds can be reached only by struggling through many a muddy ravine, and ascending many a slippery height, and scaling many a rugged and dangerous path. It will be a grand burst of music that shall hail the accomplishment of God's purposes toward our race; but in the meanwhile there requires a protracted tuning of the instruments, during which many discords and harsh notes are uttered. The agency of time is needed to prepare for the concert of eternity; and so we pass through a varied discipline here; and our years, as they roll on, are loaded with events of which the issue lies in the world that is to come.

Has it not been so with us during the year that is about to close? How much the lapse of these months has revealed to you that before was hidden! What lessons it has taught you of yourself, and of God's ways towards you! What enlarged experience it has unfolded to you of your own weakness, of your proneness to fall, of your lack of strength and courage and skill for the great moral warfare in which you are embarked, of your need of divine aid if you are to stand, and of the all-sufficiency of that aid even in the extremity of your weakness and your peril! How many things have happened to you this year, which have left their mark upon you, of which you never dreamt when the year began! You little knew what trials Time had in keeping for

you. You little knew how your faith, your principles, your character, were to be tested by the events of this year. But you have come through it; and you know that all has been for your good. Be comforted by the thought that time has its consolations, as well as its discipline. It is God's minister for this end. It heals over the scar itself has made. It dries up the tears it has caused to flow. It brings the harvest, as it brought the season of tillage and the seed-time. The promise stands firm, "In due time ye shall reap if ye faint not."

But some of you may perhaps say, "What is all this to me? I have had no very *marked* experiences this year. My time has passed on very quietly and equably. I have had no great cares, or sorrows, or losses, to press on me; nor have I had any very striking experiences of an opposite kind. I do not feel, therefore, as if I had any special call to such reflections as these." My friend, permit me to suggest that had you been more observant and more thoughtful, as the year rolled on, you might have found much in what it brought you well-deserving your notice as part of the discipline by which God was seeking to benefit your soul. But, apart from this, let me ask, Is there nothing in the mere fact that you have lived another year, of itself to cause serious thought in you? Is it nothing to know that, swiftly as it has passed, you have *had* it all -- every day, hour and moment of it, -- and must give account for it all? Is it

nothing that you are one year older -- one year nearer death, and judgment, and eternity? that you have one year less to do the work assigned to you, and to prepare for what lies before you? Oh! Count not, I beseech you, such such considerations of small moment. Dismiss not from your thoughts the solemn conclusions to which they point. Be wise, and listen to the admonitory voice which the departing year utters in your ears; for “there is neither work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither you are fast hastening.”

III. And now let me invite all to an act of *serious, earnest, self-examination* in reference to the year that is soon to close. As I have said, we have *had* this year with its varied experiences, opportunities, and privileges: the question for each of us is, What have I made of it in relation to the great end of my existence -- the mighty interest of my spiritual being? We have had *time*: What use have we put it to? We have had *opportunities*: What improvement have we made of them? We have had *means of grace*: What advantage to our souls have we gathered from these? We have had *trials*: How have we borne them, and what religious effect have they had on us? We have had *mercies*: What gratitude have we showed for them? We have had *offers of salvation*: Have we accepted them, and are we now rejoicing with a good hope in Christ the Saviour? Or has all this been in vain for us? Have we been idle,

unprofitable servants? Have we been stupid and insensible, so that God's dealings with us have not been marked, and the lessons of his hand have passed over us unheeded? Have we been carnal and worldly, and selfish, caring more for "the meat that perisheth" than for "that which endureth unto eternal life" -- more concerned to know what we should do to inherit earth's advantages, or enjoy earth's pleasures, than to know how to "walk so as to please God," and realize the blessings of his favour? Has our time been spent on that which will abide the test? Or has it been spent in the pursuit of that which "perishes with the using," and leaves only ashes and dust behind? Oh! let this be with us a season of earnest, searching self-examination, that we may learn wisdom, and that this year may not wholly pass from us without our receiving a benefit which shall last when our ears shall be at an end, and for us time shall be no longer.

Beloved, the time is short. A few more revolutions of the earth's orbit -- a few more changes of summer and of winter -- a few more intervals of sunshine and shadow -- a few more work-days and sabbath-days: and all will be over. All that is earthly shall have passed away from us. We shall have entered the now unseen world; and in its searching, all-revealing light the worth of what we have lived for here shall be tried. Shall we carry with us what will bear this test? gold tried in the fire -- rich gems that

will shine in the light of heaven -- crowns of honour which we may cast at the feet of Christ upon his throne? Oh! let the lapse of time rouse us to diligence and earnest endeavour, that we may improve the time whilst it lasts, and so may be prepared to enter with joy into the presence of our Lord, when he shall call us hence. “Wherefore beloved, be diligent, that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot and blameless.”

-- W. LINDSAY ALEXANDER, D.D.

-----

## THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

### THE SEPULCHRE.

WHEN Jesus died on the cross several wonderful things happened. I do not know whether some one of the priests might be at that moment in the holy place, but I think it not unlikely. If so, he must have been much struck with what he saw. You know that between the holy place and the most holy there hung a veil of blue. No person could by the law pass through that veil except the high priest, and he only on one day of the year, taking blood of sacrifice with him. The holiest of all, as it was named, was a figure of heaven where God dwells; it represented God's nearest presence; and the veil which closed it said that the free way to that was not yet opened. Christ's death opened it, making true atonement for sin. So, to show this, at the moment of his death the veil between the outer and inner sanctuary was rent from top to bottom without a human hand touching it. The way to heaven by Jesus is open for ever now. There were other rendings and openings that same hour. The earth shook, rocks were riven, and graves where dead bones lay were opened. That was all that was done just then; but



after Christ had risen many of the sleeping saints came out of these opened graves, and were seen by numbers of people. That was another way of showing how Jesus' death was setting wide open the road to heaven.

The great darkness, also, that had hung round the cross, and over the land, passed away; and the evening light shone out.

When the centurion that had charge of the soldiers, and those that were with him, saw those things they were filled with awe, and the centurion cried out, Certainly this was a righteous man; he must have been the Son of God. A great many persons were looking on while these things were happening, and were greatly affected by them, and turned to go home, beating their breasts for grief and wonder. Many of Christ's friends, especially women from Galilee, who loved Jesus and had often served him, were also present, though they looked on at a distance, and had witnessed all.

After Christ's death a singular thing happened to his corse. The Jews did not wish the bodies of the three crucified to be left on the cross on the sabbath day, and they went to Pilate to ask him to order their death to be hastened by breaking their legs. That was a thing often done when it was wished to bring on death faster. Pilate consented, and the soldiers got the order. So they broke, one after the other, the legs of the two thieves. Then they came last to

Jesus, but they saw that he was dead already, and they did not break his limbs. The Scripture had long before shown that God was to put a fence round that sacred body, for it said, "A bone of him shall not be broken." One of the soldiers however, fulfilling, without knowing it, another saying of Scripture, thrust a spear into the side of Jesus, making a deep gash, and out of the wound there flowed immediately blood and water. John was near at the time, and says he saw it. You know what that blood and water say to us. They say that Christ gives pardon and pureness.

In the ancient scriptures it had also been said that Jesus, though it was meant that his grave should be with the wicked, was instead, with the rich in his death. This prophecy was now fulfilled. There was a rich man, a counsellor, who though from the fear of the Jews he had not confessed him openly, was a disciple of Jesus. He had not given his consent when in the council it was revealed that Jesus should be killed, and now he came out boldly as the friend of the crucified. For he went to Pilate, and asked to have his body to bury it. The governor made some inquiry to know for certain that he was dead, and at once gave Joseph leave to take the body away. So it was taken down from the cross. Joseph was joined, in his sad but sacred task, by another rich man and member of the council. That was Nicodemus, who at one time came to Jesus by night inquiring after the truth. He had bought a large quantity of

a mixture of myrrh and aloes, and Joseph and he together having wrapped the body in linen with the sweet spices, carried it and laid it in a new tomb that Joseph had in his garden. The tomb was a cave with a door hewn out of the rock, and no person had as yet been buried there. When the two rich men had placed the body of the Lord in this tomb, they rolled a great stone to the door, and went home. The women that had been looking on at the cross had still kept near till they saw where Jesus was laid. Then they also went home, having resolved to come when the sabbath was over to anoint his body with more care.

The Jews, remembering that Jesus had said he would rise again, and professing to be afraid that his disciples would come by night and steal the body, and then say he was alive again, got Pilate's leave to seal the stone and set a watch of soldiers to keep it. But they could not keep it against the powers of angels and of God. So after the sabbath was past, and the light began to break towards morning of the first day of the week, an angel, very bright and terrible to look on, came down from heaven and rolled away the stone from the door of the tomb. The ground shook all round, and the soldiers of the watch, seeing his face like the lightning, fell like dead men on the ground with fear. Then Jesus rose, and went forth into immortality.

Would it make the story too long if I were to tell you all that happened among the disciples on the day that Jesus

rose from the dead, and I could not be sure that I would tell it all in the right order. But I will tell you how Jesus showed himself five times that day. His first appearance was to Mary Magdalene. She was standing beside the empty grave, weeping; and as she wept she stooped down and looked into it, and saw two angels sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been laid. The angels spoke to her, and said, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said, "They have taken my Lord away, and I do not know where they have laid him." With that she turned, and saw through her tears a person standing, who spoke to her, and asked also why she was weeping, and whom she was seeking. She thought he was the gardener, and said, "Sir, if you have carried him from this, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." It was Jesus himself she was speaking to, but she did not know him; and not knowing him, was turning to go away. Then, in a voice she could not mistake, Jesus said to her, "Mary." That was enough, she knew him at once, and turned, and with one word also, saying, "Master," and fell down to worship him. Jesus bade her go and tell the disciples. The next time Jesus showed himself was to a company of women. They had been at the grave, and had seen a vision of angels that told them Jesus was alive. They could hardly believe it, and were frightened by what they had seen, and were running to tell the apostles. On the

way Jesus himself met them,, and said, “All hail;” and they knew him, and went near, and held him by the feet and worshipped him. When they brought the disciples word, along with Mary Magdalene, of all this, they would not believe, but thought their words were idle tales. But before this day two of their company had occasion to go out of town to a village called Emmaus, and as they went they kept talking about what had happened, and about the strange report brought by the women. While they were doing so Jesus joined them, and walked on with them. Their eyes were held from knowing him, and he asked them, What are you saying to each other as you walk on so sadly? They said, Are you a stranger, and do not know what has been happening in Jerusalem these few days? Then they told him about Jesus, and how he was crucified; and how they had hoped that he was the Messiah, sent to redeem Israel. They went on to say how that very day, which was the third from his death, some women that were of their company had been at his grave, and had talked of seeing angels who told them he was alive. And certainly, said they, some of themselves had gone to the tomb and found it empty; but they had not seen Jesus himself. Then Jesus called them foolish, and reproved them for not believing the scriptures, and went on to explain a great many passages in all the Old Testament, and to show how they foretold that the Messiah was to suffer and die, and

then go to his glory. As he was talking they came to the village, and though Jesus was going on, they urged him to go in and stay with them, and have some refreshment. While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and brake it, and gave it to them, and they knew him then; but he immediately disappeared. They could not stay now, but got up in haste, and went back to Jerusalem to tell the news. When they came there they found the disciples gathered together, and saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and Simon has seen him. These two appearances make the third and fourth. The fifth and last that day was in the evening. The disciples were all together except Thomas, within doors, and having the doors locked, when Jesus stood in the midst of them, and said, "Peace be to you." And the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.

Several times after this, and once to over five hundred persons at the same time, Jesus appeared to those who loved him. He staid on earth for forty days, and when he showed himself to the disciples, instructed them and directed them what to do when he should have gone away. One day he appeared to them in Jerusalem, and took them with him out as far as Bethany, and standing till he lifted up his hands and blessed them. In the very act of doing so, he rose from the earth, went away through the air, and a cloud took him and covered him from sight. Two angels then appeared, and said, "This same Jesus will come again as ye

have seen him go. Do not stand here gazing up into the sky after him.” So the apostles returned, and waited in the upper room till the ascended Saviour poured out his Spirit upon them on the day of Penteost; and they began to preach his gospel among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

-----

### QUESTIONS FROM THE BIBLE STORY.

1. Where is Christ’s body, slain and wounded, spoken of as the rent veil?
2. Where is Christ called the first-fruits of them that sleep?
3. What two places in the Old Testament speak of Jesus as pierced?
4. What two parts of scripture refer to the fact that not a bone of him should be broken?
5. When did Nicodemus speak a word on behalf of justice to Jesus in the council, to be answered only by a taunt?
6. What story were the soldiers of the watch bribed to tell after Christ’s resurrection, in order to hide the truth?
7. In what chapter of the New Testament are six appearances of the risen Saviour referred to?

## 8. How many such appearances are recorded in all?

ANSWERS to the foregoing questions will be found by turning to the following chapters. -- Heb. x.; 1 Cor. xv.; Ps. xxii. and Zech. xii.; Ex. xii. and Ps. xxxiv.; John vii.; Matt. xxvii.; 1 Cor. xv.; Matt. xxviii., Mark xvi., Luke xxiv., John xx., and 1 Cor. xv.

-----

### *Prayer.*

O LORD God, who quickenest the dead, we thank Thee for the resurrection of Jesus. We thank Thee that He lay in the grave, but rejoice that He has left it for ever; we bless Thee for the hope of resurrection in Him. We pray Thee that Jesus, by His Spirit of grace and life, may now raise our souls from death, may be with us when we come to die in the body, and that when He comes to wake the dead, we may rise in Him to glory, honour and immortality. *Amen.*

-----



## THE EVENING SERVICE

OMNISCIENT God, who seest that we put not our trust in anything that we do, mercifully grant that by Thy power we may be defended against all adversities, or so mightily aided by Thy grace that we may not faint under them; but having heard Thy holy word with honest and good hearts, we may keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience, through Jesus Chris our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN, *or Psalm lxxi.* 14-18.

O GOD of Israel, hear my prayer!  
Let me thy richest blessing share:  
Thy blessing shall my pardon be;  
Oh! let that blessing rest on me!

If shining suns my path attend,  
And all their cheerful influence lend;  
Thy blessing still I'll most desire,  
To that my highest hopes aspire.

Or if affliction's storm should lower,  
I'll trust thee in the darkest hour;  
On thee I'll rest my anxious mind,

And in thy blessing comfort find.

Preserve me from the snares of sin,  
And ever keep my conscience clean,  
Till all the cares of life shall cease,  
And blessing thee, I die in peace!

### ACTS XXVI. 1-29.

THEN Agrippa said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to speak for thyself. Then Paul stretched forth his hand, and answered for himself: 2. I think myself happy, king Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews; 3. Especially because I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews: wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently. 4. My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews; 5. Which knew me from the beginning (if they would testify), that after the most straitest sect of our religion, I lived a Pharisee. 6. And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: 7. Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come: for which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I

am accused of the Jews. 8. Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead? 9. I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. 10. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. 11. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities. 12. Whereupon, as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, 13. At mid-day, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, &c.

---

*Prayer.*

ALMIGHTY God, the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and our God and Father through Him; we humbly beseech Thee for His sake to grant unto us at this time Thy blessing according to our need. Seal instruction on our hearts; grant unto us wisdom such as cometh from the right numbering of our days; and enable

us, we earnestly pray, to redeem the time, and during what may yet remain to us of life here, to order our ways with discretion, to live soberly, righteously and godly in the world, and to bring forth those fruits which shall be to the praise of the glory of Thy grace.

Thou hast reminded us that our life is but a vapour: oh! save us from seeking in this transient and fleeting existence our satisfaction and rest. Help us to set our affections on those things that are above at Thy right hand, where Christ sitteth. May our chief desire be to serve Him, and to glorify Him in our bodies and spirits, which are His. Redeemed by His precious blood, and resting exclusively on His finished work and high-priestly intercession, may we go on our way rejoicing; doing the will of God from the heart; seeking to be kind, courteous, and beneficent to all with whom we come in contact; looking, as time passes, with steadfast eye and longing desire to that promised day of the Lord when He who is our life shall appear, and we also shall appear with Him in glory. O increase our faith. May our life become ever more a life of faith, of faith in God and in the Lord our Saviour. Make us, we beseech Thee, more holy day by day; sanctify us wholly, in body, soul, and spirit; delivering us from those lusts and passions which war against the soul and sink men in perdition, and perfecting within us the new nature, that we may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things, and walk worthy of Him who hath called us to

glory and to virtue. Overrule all things that happen to us for our spiritual welfare, and for Thy glory through us. Make us to lead useful lives, promoting to the best of our ability all good causes, and devoting ourselves especially to the service of Christ's cause and kingdom in the world. Thus may we have grace given to us to live as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life, and leading men by our good works to glorify our Father who is in heaven. Gracious God, we commend unto Thee all who are near and dear unto us. Do Thou graciously have them in Thy safe keeping; enrich their souls with the treasures of Thy grace; and bring them with us to Thine everlasting kingdom and glory. Bless our country; continue to us the privileges we enjoy; save us from foreign invasion and internal discord; from the inroads of superstition, the ensnaring influences of infidelity, the wasting blight of intemperance, and the undermining effects of immorality. May our nation be an enlightened, virtuous, God-fearing nation, and our people be adorned with that righteousness which is the strength and glory of a kingdom. Be gracious to our sovereign lady the queen; give her long and prosperously to reign over these realms; and may Thy Holy Spirit so rest upon her, that all her works shall be wisely and piously done, and she shall be prepared for a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Bless all the members of the royal House, we beseech Thee; all persons in authority over us; all judges and magistrates

throughout the queen's dominions. May they, as intrusted with talents from God, have a deep sense of their responsibility to Thee, and act as those who have to give account. Be merciful unto us, O God, and bless us, and cause Thy face to shine on us; that so Thy way may be known upon the earth, and Thy saving health unto all nations. And to Thy great name shall be all the glory, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. *Amen.*

-----

## MORNING AND EVENING MEDITATIONS.

### MONDAY.

#### *Morning.*

**Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins.**

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith Unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end: I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be His God, and he shall be my son.

Isa. xl. 2. Rev. ii. 7. Rev. xxi. 6, 7.

#### *Evening.*

**For thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out.**

As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my

sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.

And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country.

I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God.

Eze. xxxiv. 11, 12, 13, 15.

## TUESDAY.

*Morning.*

**O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity.**

Who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him, even a meat-offering and a drink-offering unto the Lord your God?

Then will the Lord be jealous for his land, and pity his people.

And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, that hath dealt wonderfully with you; and my people shall never be ashamed.

And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel.

Hos. xiv. 1. Joel ii. 14, 18, 26, 27.



*Evening.*

**Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.**

All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.

I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and have it more abundantly.

And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God.

John x. 7, 8, 9, 10.      Eze. xxxiv. 31.

## WEDNESDAY.

*Morning.*

**Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves: know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?**

For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.

2 Cor. xiii. 5.      Rom. vi. 5, 6.      2 Cor. xiii. 11.

*Evening.*

**I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord.**

And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

Therefore I will look unto the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me.

In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Gen. xlix. 18.    Isa. xxv. 9.    Mich vii. 7.    1 John iv. 9, 10.

**THURSDAY.**

*Morning.*

**Jerusalem hath grievously sinned; therefore she is removed; all that honoured her despise her, because they have seen her nakedness; yea, she sigheth, and turneth backward.**

She remembereth not her last end; therefore she came down wonderfully: she had no comforter.

Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers, children that are corrupters! They have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward.

Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more. The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.

Lam. i. 8, 9. Isa. i. 4, 5.

*Evening.*

**Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.**

Now I rejoyce, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing.

For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.

For, behold, this self-same thing, that ye sorrowed, after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea,

what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.

Matt. iii. 8. 2 Cor. vii. 9, 10, 11.

## FRIDAY.

*Morning.*

**Every word of God is pure.**

The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field:

The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand for ever.

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

Prov. xxx. 5. Isa. xl. 6, 8. Heb. iv. 12, 13.

*Evening.*

**Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,**

In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, (for the trumpet shall sound;) and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God: and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

1 Cor. xv. 51, 52.      Rev. xx. 11, 12.

## **SATURDAY.**

*Morning.*

**Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.**

And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

Rev. xxii. 10, 12, 13, 14, 16.

*Evening.*

**And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.**

And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly: Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

Rev. xxii. 17, 18, 19.

# HOME PREACHER, OR CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY OF THE NEW YEAR.

“IN QUIETNESS AND IN CONFIDENCE SHALL BE  
YOUR STRENGTH.” --Isaiah xxx. 15.

THESE words give us a maxim to take with us into the New Year. We find them in that passage of Scripture, a portion of which has been read this morning, appointed for the first Sunday after Christmas. “In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength.” Trust in the Lord amid all changes, keep near to him, realize his presence. All things are changing. The days and the years of our mortal life are hastening to a close, but he in whom we trust is the Ancient of Days, unchangeable to eternity.

Now, the maxim which this passage sets before us will, perhaps, best be understood in its application, if we consider the history with which it is connected. Let us read the whole verse from which it comes -- the 15th verse: “For

thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence be your strength.” The Prophet Isaiah was commissioned to address these words to the people of Judah. Hezekiah was greatly troubled by the danger which threatened them. The host of the Assyrians had come down, and threatened to destroy him. He knew that some ten years before Hoshea, king of Israel, had been destroyed by these same Assyrians, and all his people led captive to the land of the Medes. Hoshea and his people had sought defence by making an alliance with the idolatrous Egyptians; but, as the verses of this chapter remind us, Egypt and people of Hezekiah now seem to have urged him to make the same alliance, an alliance which had proved so fatal to Hoshea and the Israelites; but Isaiah was commissioned to warn him that, if there was such a design, it must be given up. In quietness and in confidence was to be their strength, not in any arm of flesh; and Hezekiah, convinced by the prophet’s warning, went into the house of the Lord, and when the insulting message which was brought from his enemy was laid before him, he spread it before the Lord, and offered that remarkable prayer which we read in the thirty-seventh chapter. And then Isaiah was commissioned to tell him what should be the fate of this great Assyrian host; and a few verses afterwards we read how Isaiah’s prophecy was accomplished, and these men,



who had threatened utterly to destroy God's people, were themselves utterly destroyed by the angel of the Lord. Thus surely was the heart of Hezekiah strengthened, as he was assured that God was ready to watch over and to defend his people from all dangers. By trust in God, and not by the arm of flesh, was he saved.

This is the lesson, my friends, which I would have you take into this new year. In all anxieties, public and private, wait on the Lord. The conviction of his presence and of his readiness to succour, will be our greatest security, and still all anxieties and alarms. But this conviction that God is near, and that he watches over his people, is it indeed a well-grounded, reasonable conviction, whereon men may afford to stake their imagination? -- good, perhaps, for the world's things, and which ever delighted in some communication with the world unseen -- good for times, the thoughts of which naturally embody themselves in old books speaking of these old times -- but unfit, as they say, for the scrutiny of the metaphysical ages which have followed, and still less fit to stand in that age of self-satisfied acquiescence in the positive evidence of things tested by actual experience, in which men would have us believe now that all wisdom lies? Good indeed is this impression of God's nearness, and of his personal interference with the things of the world, and of his readiness to help those who trust in him -- good in the estimate of the childlike spirit! And has

not the Lord said, "Except ye become as little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven?" Does not the highest wisdom pronounce, echoing the Lord's words, that the only assured entrance into the highest knowledge of man's destiny and of his duties is through the childlike, teachable spirit? In all departments of human science, do not the wisest tell us that humility goes hand in hand with the highest knowledge? That the truest knowledge is most accessible in all moral matters to the teachable, the pure, the simple! In ages of advanced material civilization, wise men refused not to learn of the simple ages of faith. Not only in moral truth, but in art, in poetry, what wise man doubts but that the most advanced civilization may learn much from the childlike ages of the world -- the ages of faith? And so especially in religion and in morality, no wise man doubts but that we ought to go back to simple times, and that we may gather many lessons from the simple thoughts which recommend themselves to childlike spirits, and in them we have often the truest wisdom. Certainly now, as of old, no wisdom is worthy of the name that does not acknowledge God's presence and his protecting power. All good and wise men live in God's presence, rejoice in that access which is opened up to him through prayer, sanctify the day by the morning and the evening devotions, have a real satisfaction in spreading all their cares before him as Hezekiah spread the letter of his insulting enemy: thus do

they feel their spirits best braced for endurance, or for efforts to disentangle themselves from every difficulty. To trust in God as present, and in God as overruling all things--this is the truest wisdom; this is of the very essence of all true religion. Even Deism, if it be worthy of the name -- if it be a real belief in a personal God -- will acknowledge this: all personal religion must have this access to God, must believe in his presence, in his readiness to protect, in his watchful care and as with the personal religion of men, one by one, so with the religion of nations, which, if it be not the mere vain profession of orthodoxy imposed by authority, is the aggregate of the real, vital, religious principle of the many individuals who compose that nation. This is a religious nation, the men and women of which, in their several degrees, acknowledge this presence and protecting power of God, look upon him as ever near, ever ready to support his people. This is the only security, both for individuals and for nations in all times of perplexity and doubt. Let us cast our eyes back even to the scenes which we ourselves remember -- that dark winter of 1854! What was it that saved men from utter despondency, when so many families knew that those who were dearest to them were exposed to the greatest privations in a distant camp? -- what but the assurance that God watched over the soldier in the field as he had watched over him as a little child when gathered round the family hearth in the yet undivided

family. Or that even bitterer trial which the nation knew two years afterwards, when each post was looked for with anxiety, almost with despondency, lest it should bring intelligence of dishonour worse than death for those who were nearest and dearest to so many families, when the horror of impending calamity brooded over those days of the early summer and mocked the brightness of the autumn, and all men were in a suspense, which became almost intolerable: what kept families from fainting under the thought of these calamities, but the knowledge that God was present everywhere to watch over his people, that no one was in any real danger who was under his protection? And in our more common trials, so common in every family, when we hang over the beloved, and a silence more expressive than any words tells us that soothing medicines can do no more, that there is no more help in man; what is it that prevents suspense from becoming despair but the knowledge which we have that in God's hands all is well -- in God's hands all is well for life and for death? In the ordinary distresses to which all of us, the children of humanity, are continually subject, we must be crushed unless we had this trust in God; unless, indeed, we take refuge in dogged insensibility unworthy of men, or cheat the gnawing pain at our hearts by the irritation of some outward distraction of activity. For men, then, one by one, in this world so full of trials, and for nations, which are

composed of men, there is no security, no support in the midst of trial, but this growing conviction that God is present, very near, watching over his people, ready to support them -- a kind and loving friend and father. And if for individuals and nations, still more for churches. God's presence to us Christians is guaranteed in a nearer and dearer form. On this rock of faith, the conviction of God's nearness in Christ, he has built his church. God brought near in Christ's atoning power, in Christ's intercession, in Christ as ruling over his church, seated by the eternal throne, what is this but Christian faith, that rock on which the church of Christ is built? And the gates of hell shall not prevail against the truth and the worship of the gospel in the church of Christ, because we have his assured word, telling us more distinctly than we knew before, of God's nearness -- "Behold, I am with you alway even unto the end of the world." This, then, is the lesson which we gather from these simple words addressed to Hezekiah, and which I would have you take into the New Year, in confidence and in quietness, because you rest on God revealed in Jesus Christ, knowing him to be near, knowing him to be watching over you, secure under his protection. These words spoken to Hezekiah remind us of the old scene by the Red Sea. "Stand still!" said Moses, when the chariots and horsemen of Pharaoh and captains over every one of them came in sight, and the people were troubled and cried aloud

-- “Stand still, and see the glory of God! These Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day, ye shall see them again no more for ever.” So with the Assyrians, who terrified Hezekiah with their insolent message. He thought that they had come to destroy them, as they had destroyed his neighbours in Samaria; but “stand still, and see the glory of God.” These Assyrians whom ye see to-day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. “And the angel of the Lord went forth and smote them, and before the morning watch they were all dead corpses.” It was indeed the hand of the Lord, and he manifested himself the protector of his people who trusted in him.

And even if the foolish Egyptian legend were true that it was some noxious animal that destroyed their power to fight; even if it were the deadly plague that raged in their camp and slew so many thousands of them, as the host of the Persians found a living grave some few years afterwards; even if any natural cause could be assigned for this destruction of the host (and we dare not pry into the secondary means by which God works), it was his angel, it was his hand, his protecting power. God saved the people who trusted in him, and he slew those who were confident in their own strength, showing to all generations that he was ready to defend those who trusted in him, and that he would overthrow those who trusted in the arm of flesh.

Thus Isaiah's words were proved true within a few days --  
"In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength."

And now let us endeavour to see more distinctly what is that state of mind which Isaiah urged on Hezekiah, and which we urge on you to take with you into this new year. "Herein," says St. John, "is the patience and the faith of the saints," when they were waiting for the great persecution. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace," says Isaiah, "whose mind is stayed on thee." "Wait on the Lord," says David, "and be of good cheer, and he shall strengthen thine heart. "They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever." This patient trusting in God, we say, is the essence of all faith; it was the faith of the old Fathers, and their faith is the same in its essence as ours. Sometimes men find a difficulty in understanding how the faith of the Fathers of the Old Testament can be said to be the same as ours, since they knew nothing plainly of him who is the very centre of our faith. Their faith was the same in its essence, though different in its objects. To the Jews God revealed himself as a watchful, ever kind Father: God reveals himself to us Christians, likewise, as a watchful, ever kind Father, yet brought still nearer to us in Christ. The gospel tells us of God, in what it tells us of Christ's atoning sacrifice. The terrors of a guilty conscience can no longer, by the remembrance of the past, keep men from realizing the

presence and the protection of God: for God in Christ has revealed himself as a Father near to sinners, reconciled to them through the atoning blood of Christ. And then Christ reveals God to us by his intercession, showing that our poor prayers and our weakness cannot bar our access to our loving Father; for he who died for us is making intercession for us, and bringing us nearer to our Father in heaven: and Christ revealed as ruling over us, prevents the majesty of the eternal throne, the clouds, and the darkness, and the lightning, from driving us away from the eternal Father's presence. These do not appal us when we understand that the elder brother of our race is by the eternal throne, that he who knows in his own experience what is man's weakness and his want, who was tempted in all things like as we are, yet without sin, is ordained to be the Ruler and the Judge of men.

Our faith, then, though its objects are new, and God is brought far nearer to us than he was to the ancient Fathers, is still the same in essence as theirs; God to them, as to us, was the refuge in anxieties. To him they were to open all griefs and all difficulties, and the words of our text set before us in their case the very essence of that same faith and trust in a loving God, which keeps us under all anxieties and troubles and trials. Now, no thoughtful man will begin the new year without anxiety; the experience at once of our prosperity and of our past trials will make us anxious: the



remembrance of our prosperity, lest the time for which it is to last may be hastening to a close, and a few weeks or months may see the end of it; the remembrance of past trials, when we reflect how suddenly and unexpectedly they have come upon us, and therefore how unexpectedly they may return. The year that is gone, its memories, both of joy and of sorrow, must make us anxious, then, for the year which is to come. We ask ourselves, as the year closes, what growth of grace there has been, what strength of Christian character formed through the months that are past, what shortcomings, what fallings away; and both our having been enabled to stand hitherto, and our having fallen, may well make us anxious for the time to come. The motto is, "In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength." Be on your guard, be ready for alarm. Soldiers, entering a dangerous country where are many secret enemies watching to attack you, bear with you the church's watchword, "Watch and pray" For us, one by one, what dangers may be in store we know not, either for the body's health or the soul's. All may seem peaceful, or the observant and anxious eye may descry already some symptoms of the coming storm; but whether our hearts speak to us of peace or of alarm, it is well to watch, and he only watches well whose heart is stayed on God in Christ, and who, in the quietness and confidence of Christian faith, looks ever to God as a present Father, ready to protect and

to hear when he pours forth his cares. Good men are of good heart in entering upon new difficulties. They think how God has dealt kindly with them in the time past; the bitterness which would be a poison to the spirit, from the memory of past sins, is done away through the thought of the atoning blood of Christ; and the faithful Christian, looking calmly on the past, anxiously, but yet trustfully, to the future, knows that, as he has been sustained in past trials, so his gracious God and Father will sustain him in the trials of the unknown months that lie before him. A good man does not fear even the last great trial; he knows that the same kind Saviour who has been with him in lesser trials will be with him in the great change and trial of death; and therefore, whether the months of the year on which he is entering are charged with the message of his death or no, he is calm, because he can trust Him who is, in the Lord Jesus Christ, an assured protector and friend.

This, then, is the frame of mind in which Christians enter upon new year -- not recklessly, not plunging rashly into great changes, not silencing their natural anxiety with the light laughter which speaks of shallow feelings and of thoughtless ends, but calmly reviewing the past and looking thoughtfully into the future, and yet trusting the Lord, who is an ever-present friend. And those Christians can enter upon these changes even with rejoicing. The Christian church teaches us to close the year with rejoicing --

rejoicing because Christ has been born, knowing that the birth of Christ assures for Christ's people the near protecting power of God as friend and saviour in every time of change. The New Year, then, my friends, is naturally a time for calm and thoughtful rejoicing; but for whom? For those only who can enter on it confident in the strength of him who is proved in Christ to be an ever-present friend. No cold, worldly schemer, no scoffing infidel, no heartless debauchee, no thoughtless child of senseless pleasure, none but those who are growing quietly year by year in the faith of Christ and in the strength of Christian principle, dare enter joyfully on these unknown months; but for them the peace of God in Christ keeps their hearts and minds free from all alarm. The faithful Jews, my friends, were wont to take comfort in every time of distress by looking back on the way in which God had dealt with their fathers in past times. "Remember," they said to one another, "his marvellous works that he hath done, his wonders and the judgments of his mouth, O ye seed of Abraham his servant, ye children of Jacob his chosen; he hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations." They looked back on God's dealings with them in the past history of their nation, and took comfort for the time to come. And so we, also, one by one, may have comfort for the future, by thinking how God has dealt with us in our separate souls.

-- ARCH. CAMPBELL TAIT, D.C.L. (*Archbishop of Canterbury*).

# PRAYERS FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS.

## I. -- *On the Occasion of Sickness in a Family.*

ALMIGHTY God, Creator of the end of the earth, we worship Thee; humbly acknowledging Thy dominion over us, and Thy right to order and to rule our life. Thy goings forth have been of old, from everlasting, and Thy years throughout all generations. Thy days are not as the days of a man, neither can the number of Thy years be searched out. But as for us, our days are determined, and our months are with Thee. Thou hast appointed the bounds which we cannot pass. Daily Thou givest to know that here we have no continuing city, but are strangers and pilgrims, as were all our fathers. O God, Thou only wise, so teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts to wisdom. So make us to know our end and the shortness of the time, that we may live as they who look for a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

We know not what a day may bring to pass, but this we do know, that when Thou sendest trouble and pain, Thou dost remind us of the frailty of our frame, and of that

judgment that is passed on all men, because that all have sinned. Would God that each weaker and more trying hour in life, that all our infirmities and diseases, were sanctified of God, so that they might be to us seasons of heart-searching and repentance -- occasions of grace, and the channels of Thy saving health. Merciful Father, we thank Thee that Thou hast greatly encouraged us to look to Thee for help in all our doing and suffering, and to pray with and for each other; believing that Thou hearest prayer, and art able to fulfil all our desire. Wherefore seeing Thou hast been pleased to lay Thy chastening hand upon us and to visit us with trouble, we pray Thee, as the members of one household and family, on behalf of him who is sick among us. The Lord hear us in the day of trouble, and send us help from the sanctuary, and strengthen us out of Zion. We humbly pray Thee to bless all the means employed for his recovery, and in Thy loving-kindness to restore him to health and strength, so that he may praise Thee among the living, and behold Thy goodness on the earth. We commend him in faith to Thy fatherly care, beseeching Thee to relieve his pain, and to make all his bed in his sickness.

*[To be used, or not, as occasion may require.]*

Especially do we pray Thee, that now when Thou hast laid him on a bed of weakness and withdrawn him from

labour and duty, Thou wouldest cause this to be a time of holy meditation and communion, and of refreshing from the presence of the Most High. Cause Thy light to shine on him, so that he may see the things that are seen and temporal in the light of things that endure forever, and are at the right hand of God. So do to him, according to the purpose of Thy grace, that he may yet praise Thee for Thy faithfulness and for all the way by which Thou hast led him, and say, with thy servant of old, It is good for me that I have been afflicted. And though the outward man be weak, strengthen him with might by Thy Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in his heart by faith; that being rooted and grounded in love, he may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge.

O God, who alone knowest whether there be length of days, or but few days before him, we leave him in Thy most merciful hand; we commit him to Thy fatherly care and keeping, now and for ever. Thou knowest our hearts and knowest we would have it otherwise with him than it is. O forgive us if we seem to doubt Thy love or wisdom. Forgive us, who are but of yesterday and know nothing; and in Thine infinite compassion prepare him for all that Thou hast prepared for him. Dispel his fears, enlighten his darkness, give him to see the measure of that love of Thine which passeth knowledge. Help him to look, not upon

himself, where all is vile, but unto Christ who hath borne our sins, and by on offering of himself hath perfected them that believe. Comfort, stablish, strengthen him, so that he may wait with patience all the appointed time, and be glad even in his trouble. Pour out upon him of Thy grace, so that he may have the unction of the Holy Spirit as his preparation for all that Thou hast appointed unto him. So help him, we beseech Thee, to apprehend the all-sufficiency of that atonement which Christ hath wrought for us in His blood, and to lean on His power and love, and to receive of His life into his heart, that his every thought may be brought into subjection to the obedience of Christ, and that he may yield him wholly in faith and loving confidence to Thy hand and will.

O God, our merciful God and Father, whatsoever be Thy purpose toward him in this life, grant that when the sojourn of life is ended with him and us, we may meet together where there is neither sickness, nor death, nor separation. Hear us, O God, for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

-----



## II. -- *On the Birth of a Child.*

ALMIGHTY God, our Creator and Preserver, who callest those things that be not as though they were, we thank Thee for life -- the first of all Thy gifts to us and to all men. And knowing that the increase of life is with Thee, and that Thou alone preparest the joys by which it is made glad, we praise Thee for this most precious proof of Thy goodwill and favour. And forasmuch as with this child Thou hast committed to our charge an immortal soul, made in Thy likeness, after Thine own image, help us to receive the child which Thou hast given us, as not ours only, but as also Thine -- that by the ties that bind our hearts together in a mutual love and trust, we may be also drawn, as by the cords of a man, to Thee our God and Father.

O God, of whom the whole family in heaven and on the earth is named, who carest for the least as for the greatest, and doth suffer the little ones to come to Thee, let Thy fatherly blessing rest on this our child, from this time henceforth, for ever. Spare him, we beseech Thee, that he may see Thy goodness among the living, and have joy in Thy loving-kindness to the sons of men, and rejoice in Thy salvation. Endue him with health and strength, with wisdom and understanding; and so enrich him with Thy heavenly grace that he may be as light in the household, for

solace and comfort to all relatives and friends, and live to the praise of Thy honour and glory. Deal kindly with him throughout all his time upon the earth; open Thy hand liberally that he may receive the things that are good and needful for the life that now is, and let Thy sweet mercies come to him abundantly, O God of our salvation.

We, who see but a little way before us, and know not what a day may bring to pass, beseech Thee to cause Thy power to be round about him continually for his defence, and Thy light and truth for guidance and instruction. In all time of danger be nigh unto him for deliverance, and forsake him not in any trouble. Give Thine angels charge concerning him, and uphold his goings and direct his path. And, at the time of his sojourning being spent in well-doing and honour, when all Thy purpose of grace has been fulfilled in him, and Thou hast perfected that which concerneth him, receive him into Thine everlasting kingdom and the inheritance of Thy children.

Even as we have received him at Thy fatherly hand, so now we commit him in faith and hope to Thy care. Father of mercies, we beseech Thee, hear our prayer, for the sake of Jesus Christ, Thine only Son, our Lord. *Amen.*

-----

### III. -- *On the Baptism of a Child.*

BLESS the Lord, O our souls, and all that is within us, bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O our souls, and forget not all His benefits; who forgiveth all our iniquities; who healeth all our diseases; who redeemeth our life from destruction; who crowneth us with loving-kindness and tender mercies. Merciful and gracious, slow to anger and full of compassion, hast Thou shown Thyself this day to us and to our dear child. How great are the riches of grace which Thou hast promised and confirmed to this Thy weak helpless creature! With what peaceful confidence may we not now commit him to Thy fatherly arms; with what joyful hope may we not bring him up before Thee! Seeing he has been received into Thy church, that Thou hast taken it upon Thee to care specially for him, and settest heaven before him as his true home. We thank Thee, O God, whose name is Love; and we beseech Thee now to fulfil unto this child all Thy promises, according to Thy faithfulness, and to keep Thy covenant to be a Father unto us, and we shall be Thy sons and daughters. Grant that henceforth he may be a true member of the body of Christ; keep him evermore in the possession and enjoyment of all the good gifts secured to him in the holy ordinance of baptism; and do Thou also help him to keep the covenant with Thee, and in the obedience of

faith to present himself an offering well pleasing unto Thee. Help, Lord, we pray Thee, that he may be brought up in all faithfulness and godliness, to the honour and praise of Thy holy name. Help us, his parents and friends, so that we may do unto him, as an heir of Thy kingdom, all that is needful for his wellbeing. And do Thou bless all our labour, and hear all our supplications; and grant that we and this child may be admitted into the heavenly inheritance, which Thou hast promised to all believers, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

-----

#### IV. -- *On the Death of a Child.*

O GOD, who hast promised to be a refuge in times of trouble, we come to Thee in our distress and pain. It hath seemed good to Thee, in Thine unsearchable wisdom, to take from us our child whom we loved. Our wounds are open and bleed; yet do Thou help us to bow meekly to Thy holy will; not murmuring at Thy way and dealing. Thou willest he should now dwell with Thee; and we know that in the mansions of bliss Thou wilt provide for him, beyond our love and power. Therefore would we lay our hand upon our mouth, and humble us before that will of Thine, which alone is good. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord.

O God, our heavenly Father, who hast given us to know that all things work together for good to them that love Thee, make us patient and resigned, that we may glorify Thee in this sore affliction, and submit ourselves unto Thee in the obedience of Christ. Comfort us with the words which He spake -- Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. And so help us, lest weeping and refusing to be comforted, we be as they who thus forbid the little ones to come to Thee. O help us by that grace of Thine which is sufficient for us, to render with joyfulness of the spirit that which

Thou requirest; believing it is good it should be so with us,  
and that, as for our child, it is far better.

We bless Thee for the hope, set before us in the gospel,  
of a joyful resurrection and reunion with our loved ones that  
have gone before. And that we may truly comfort us with  
this hope, wash us, Thou Shepherd and Bishop of our souls,  
in Thine own blood, that we may be delivered from wrath,  
and in the power of Thy righteousness have joy in the day  
of judgment. O keep our hearts and minds in Thy perfect  
peace, whilst Thou guidest us through this vale of tears into  
Thy heavenly kingdom, through Him who loved us and  
gave Himself for us, who died and is risen from the dead,  
Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

-----

V. -- *On a Day Appointed for Communion.*

ALMIGHTY God, who hast revealed Thyself within us and around us, so that we might feel after Thee with the understanding and the heart, we thank Thee that Thou hast made known to us the purpose of Thy grace concerning us, in the knowledge and revelation of Jesus our Lord. And seeing that in Him Thou hast given us exceeding great and precious promises for the encouragement of our faith, help us now and always to believe Thy word, and to have hope in Thy mercy.

O God, Creator and Sustainer of all things, we, who have been upheld of Thee in all time of our strength and weakness, in our joys and sorrows, in prosperity and trouble, desire to acknowledge the help of Thy good hand in each hour of our life to this present. We have laid us down and slept, and we have awaked, for Thou the Lord hast sustained us. We, who continually do err and are ever nigh unto destruction, being girt about by infirmities of the flesh and spirit, and beset by the temptations of an evil world, and exposed to the dangers of this mortal life, do give Thee thanks for all the experience we have had of Thy faithfulness and love. Daily Thou loadeest us with Thy benefits, and the night-watches do not withdraw us from Thy care. Especially do we praise Thee for the light of the

glorious gospel of Thy Son, Jesus, through whom we have received the message of reconciliation. We praise Thee for the faith which it kindles, and the blessed hope that is begotten of it. For its comfort in affliction, for its joy in tribulation, for its peace triumphing in death, we praise, we magnify Thy holy name.

O God, our merciful Father, who makest provision for our wants and callest us into the fellowship of the Holy Spirit; on this day of holy resting and communion enable us, we beseech Thee, to enter into the place where prayer is wont to be made, and let it be unto us according to Thy word. Deny us not Thy grace, nor withhold Thy loving-kindness, in the solemn duties in which we desire to engage. May we, and all who this day draw near to the table of the Lord, be moved with a true repentance and experience a godly sorrow. May we be filled also with a holy love, and supported by a lively faith -- being quickened by the power of the Holy Ghost. Doing this in remembrance of Him who bare our sins in His own body on the tree, may we know the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable to his death, bringing home to us the greatness of our iniquity, may be apprehended by us as the proofs of an everlasting love, the sign and seal of an infinite mercy. So work in us, that in the eating of bread we may discern the Lord's body, and may feed on Him unto life eternal; and that the cup of



which we drink may be unto Thy servants as the new testament in His blood, whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption. O God -- the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit -- descend this day into our hearts, and not into ours only, but also into the hearts of Thy believing people throughout the world, with Thine abiding peace.

To this end be pleased to direct and strengthen all those to whom Thou hast committed the ministry of the word and sacraments, as is needful for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. Enrich them with Thy heavenly grace, and give to them the utterance of the heart and lips that is to the showing forth of praise; that at their hand the Holy Spirit may take of the things of Christ and reveal them unto us. These things we ask, even as we hope to receive all things that are good and needful for us, through the only Mediator, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

-----

## VI. -- *Before Communion.*

O GOD, who hast seen me and known my ways, Thou knowest all mine iniquity and my sin. Thou knowest how, in the blindness of a carnal, selfish life, I have forgotten Thee, and rebelled against Thy holy rule, and desired that Thou wouldst cease to strive with me.

Most merciful God, I bless Thee that Thou didst not leave me to every vain desire and wicked way, but hast called me by Thy Son unto repentance and new obedience of life in faith. I bless Thee that through faith in Hm, Thou dost enable me to look to Thee for the forgiveness of my sin, to trust in the all-sufficiency of Thy grace, and to rejoice in Thy salvation.

What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all His people.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, I come in faith to Thee. O count me not unworthy to be numbered with Thy disciples, neither forbid that I do this in remembrance of Thee. By Thy humiliation and obedience unto death; by Thy cross and pains, witnessing to that love of Thine which passeth knowledge -- have pity upon me and redeem my soul.

O my God, I am poor and needy: make haste to succour me; for I wait on Thee. Thou who didst not withhold Thy Son, Thine only Son, withhold not now the consolations of Thy Holy Spirit; strengthen, quicken me. For the sake of Him who died, that we might have life, perfect that good work which Thou hast begun in me, to the praise of the glory of Thy grace. *Amen.*

-----

## VII. -- *After Communion.*

MY soul doth magnify the Lord, because of the goodness of His house, even of His holy place; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, and my heart is glad in Thy mercies.

And now, Lord, bless, I beseech Thee, this communion of the body and blood of Christ unto my spiritual nourishment and growth in grace, and of Thy mercy help me, so that henceforth bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in my body. As I have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so help me to walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in faith. Strengthen me with all might unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness, that I may be made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. In all things assist me; in the discharge of every duty and in the bearing of every burden, alike in doing and in suffering Thy holy will. Having named the name of Christ, may I depart from all iniquity. O forbid that I should crucify afresh the Lord of glory, or put Him to an open shame. Prepare me for all that Thou hast prepared for me; strengthen me for all that Thou hast given me to do; and in the hour of weakness and of trial make Thy grace sufficient, and perfect Thy strength. Give me faith to follow in the footsteps of My Lord and Saviour, and lead me into those

pleasures that are at Thy right hand for evermore. Hear me, O God, I humbly pray Thee, and accept of me and sanctify me wholly to Thy service, through Jesus Christ Thy Son. *Amen.*

-----

VIII. -- *On the Evening of the day of Communion.*

ALMIGHTY God, who art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea, we lift up our souls unto Thee. Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever! We sinners, who of ourselves are in nowise worthy to approach Thee or receive anything at Thy hand, do give Thee thanks, as with one voice and heart, for all the goodness and mercy which Thou hast made to pass before us. May the prayers and supplications we have this day offered, with contrition of heart and unfeigned sorrow for our offences, and holy resolutions of amendment of life, enter into Thine ear. And as we have seen Thy power and Thy glory in the sanctuary, and have called upon our souls and all that is within us to magnify Thy name, so help us of Thine infinite compassion, that the temper and disposition of the day of holy fellowship and communion may abide with us in every pursuit and labour, in every change and trial, of our earthly pilgrimage. Forbid that at any time we should doubt Thy love or despair of Thy help, for Thou art faithful and canst not deny Thyself.

O God, impart to us the gift of the Holy Spirit according to Thy promise and the measure of our need. Make Thy grace sufficient for us, and perfect Thy strength in our weakness, that nothing that offendeth Thy holy rule may henceforth have dominion over us. And in all our shortcomings and offences turn Thou unto us in mercy, and restore our souls. We beseech Thee so to order our life that we may ever have a joyful sense of Thy presence and love, and commit our souls unto Thee in welldoing. And knowing that we are called to be fellow-workers together with Thee in every good and perfect work, may we follow after that which is good and engage with zeal in Thy service, and by so much the more as we see the day approaching.

We pray for all who have been partakers with us in the communion of the body and blood of Christ, beseeching Thee, in Thy abundant mercy, to satiate their souls with Thy goodness. We bless Thee in behalf of those who, at Thy table, tasted that the Lord is gracious, and who were enabled to eat the true bread which cometh down from heaven, and which giveth life unto the world. If any have been guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, may they obtain forgiveness, and be purged from their iniquity, through the blood of Jesus. May the mind which was in Him, be in all His followers. As He loved them, may they also have love one to another, and thus show to all men that they are his disciples. May their love be evinced by their

mutual forbearance, by deeds of brotherly kindness, and by their striving together for the edifying of the body of Christ. May they be enabled to hold fast the truth; and while contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, be put away from them, with all malice. May the faith that is in them be more and more seen to be a living and animating principle, impelling them to do good to all men, as they have opportunity, especially to those who have the seal of Christ upon them.

Grant, O Lord, that Thy people may feel an ever-deepening interest in all that pertains to the advancement of Thy cause in the world. Of their high and holy privileges, of the blissful and elevating hopes which Thou hast taught them to cherish, may they labour more and more strenuously that all be partakers. Confiding in the promises and the power of their risen and exalted Lord, and in nothing terrified by their adversaries, may they unceasingly strive to hasten the coming of the time when His gospel shall be preached to every creature that is under heaven. May they be nerved to grapple with every obstacle, and to face every discouragement and danger, by the knowledge that the Lord of hosts, wonderful in counsel and excellent in working, is ever on their side, and that His purposes of mercy in behalf of a fallen and perishing world none can disannul.



And now unto Him that loved us, and washed us  
from our sins in His own blood: to Him be glory and  
dominion for ever and ever. *Amen.*

-----

-- ARCH. CAMPBELL TAIT, D.C.L. ( *Archbishop of Canterbury* ).